Textbook tasks and reading literacy

A closer look at the teacher's resources in secondary school

Espen Johannesen Anvedsen

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Espen Johannesen Anvedsen

Preface

The intention of this thesis has been to analyse textbook tasks as tools for teachers when they are working on developing students' reading literacy as a foundation skill. The aim of my research is to discuss to what extent textbook tasks related to literary texts contribute to the process of developing students' reading literacy as a foundation skill in the Knowledge promotion. My research intends to answer the question: *to what extent do textbook tasks contribute to the development of students' reading literacy in English in Norwegian secondary schools?*

I became interested in this phenomenon when reading the tasks for Gulliver's Travel in a textbook used by a class I had my teacher's training in. What disappointed me with the tasks was that they more or less only functioned as a controlling element in order to check whether the students had read the text or not. As a fan of Jonathan Swift and his writing, I found it quite sad that a literary text of such a substantial proportion was treated as superficially as I experienced through the tasks. The teacher of the class, without any discussion, checked the students' responses to the tasks. The many current topics that resided in the text were left behind when the students were asked to start on a new text the next lesson. This experience made me think of how instrumental the literary texts were treated when I attended upper secondary school myself. After practicing as a student teacher for a while, an interest towards finding out what the textbook tasks might contribute to in the process of developing reading literacy as a foundation skill emerged.

What I have done in the process of this thesis is to analyse textbook tasks in order to get a general impression of to what extent the tasks can be considered means towards reading literacy as a foundation skill. To answer the thesis question I have conducted a qualitative research with a hermeneutic research design in order to be able to explain the students' response to the tasks according to operationalized categories of reading literacies and foundation skill level.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The aim of my research is to discuss to what extent textbook tasks related to literary texts contribute to the process of developing reading literacy as a foundation skill in the Knowledge promotion. My research intends to answer the question: to *what extent do textbook tasks contribute to the development of students' reading literacy in English in Norwegian secondary schools?*

I will base my study on tasks found in textbooks that have been published for the subject *English literature and culture* VG3 in the Knowledge Promotion (LK06 2006), which is the highest level in English studies in the Norwegian upper secondary school.

Textbooks are used extensively in most Norwegian classrooms. Research carried out in Norwegian schools, such as the SMUL-report (Hodgson, J., Rønning, W., Tomlinson, P., 2012), which addresses the relationship between teaching and learning in the Norwegian school, the Master thesis *Reading in upper secondary* written by Linn Hovd Faye-Schøll (2009) and research carried out by Ragnhild Lund (2001, 2002), which will be addressed later on in this thesis, all point to this fact. According to these studies, we can assume that textbooks are a key resource for teachers when developing their students' reading literacy in English in the Knowledge Promotion.

There is very little research on the use of textbook tasks, to what extent textbook tasks help students develop their reading literacy and consequently, how reliant the teacher should be on the textbook in order to work towards the competence aims in the Knowledge Promotion. Because textbook tasks might vary from one textbook to another, the results from this thesis will not be universal, but more of a qualitative insight into a field where little research has been conducted so far as far as I could find.

I have chosen to base my datacollection on the tasks in textbooks made for *English Literature and Culture* at the VG3 level at Upper Secondary school. The reason for this will be addressed further in the methodical chapter, but one strong reason is that this subject is the highest level in the English curriculum in the Knowledge Promotion and it is therefore possible to assume that the tasks will challenge the students in all of the five reading levels, which will be presented in the methodical chapter.

Reading literacy is a *foundation skill* in the Knowledge Promotion (LK06: 3). This implies that the national policymakers have put reading literacy on the agenda. Even though reading has this vigorous part in the subject syllabus, there is disagreement as to how this skill is best promoted and how much

it is focused upon. The master thesis *Reading in upper secondary* by Faye-Schjøll presents results to support the suspicion that many Norwegian L2[1] teachers neglect the teaching of reading skills as they believe the students have learned this in their L1 subject (Faye-Schjøll, Linn Hovd: 2009). The focus of many teachers in the language classroom is on the written and oral skills and they are also the skills that are explicitly tested on centrally given exams.

Reading literacy is also one of the skills that are assessed in PISA and PIRLS and is the focus of ongoing research both nationally and internationally. The definition of reading literacy in the PISA Assessment framework is widely accepted in studies concerning reading literacy and is as follows:

> ***Reading literacy:*** *An individual's capacity to: understand, use, reflect on and engage with written texts, in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate in society.* (PISA 2006: 1)

The foundation skill of reading (grunnleggende ferdigheter) in the Knowledge Promotion holds many qualities that resemble this definition. The aims for the reading skills in *English Literature and Culture* are quite advanced, as the PISA definition of reading literacy. It is therefore important to work on the skill in its entirety if the students are to be able to develop the skills of reading as presented in the following excerpt from the foundation skills of the subject:

> ***Being able to read*** in English involves understanding, exploring and pondering demanding texts, thereby gaining insight across cultures and special fields. This is an integral part of practical language skills. It also involves the ability to choose a reading strategy suited to the intended purpose. (LK06: 3)

With this as the aim for the students, the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training signalise that the knowledge of decoding the sentences into an understanding utterance is far from sufficient. Neither is the knowledge of identifying the key topic, main theme, main ideas or basic structure in a text. The students are also expected to be able to *explore* and *ponder* to gain insight across cultures and special fields. This means that the students are expected to learn a reading skill that is quite advanced and therefore demands fairly advanced tasks and training. The foundation skill of reading further stresses that the students *are* to develop the ability to choose a suitable reading strategy for the

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[1] L1: The first language or mother tongue of the applier. L2: Defined as any language learned after a person's mother tongue or first language (L1). For this thesis considered to be the English language.

intended purpose. It is therefore important that the skill is worked on continuously if the students are to develop the aimed skills for the subject.

In this thesis, I will firstly present the topic of this thesis and explain why there is a necessity to examine more about what the textbook tasks can contribute to the process of learning. In the first part of this thesis I will also address why it is relevant to assess the task qualities in relation to reading as a foundation skill. My aim with these presentations is to introduce the reader of this thesis to what I consider a neglected side of the Norwegian education and by this strengthen the purpose of this thesis. In chapter 2, I will present the theories this thesis is based upon. First, I will present a selection of the reading literacies, and secondly there will be a presentation of reading theories.

In chapter 3, I will present and clarify the methodical choices that have been made in the process of this thesis. There will be a thorough presentation and discussion around my choice of the qualitative method. However, I will also present some of the methodical alternatives that were up for consideration and why these were left as unsuitable for this thesis.

In chapter 4, I will present the analysis of the two textbook tasks. Here the reader will both be presented with the textbook tasks as well as explanations to what they can contribute with in the process of developing the students' reading literacy.

In chapter 5, there will be a discussion around the possible implications of the task qualities. This will firstly be addressed in relation to how the presented reading literacies, in chapter 2, might or might not be developed. The second part of this chapter will address how suitable the textbook tasks are according to the five reading levels from the PISA assessment framework (PISA 2006, 17-18) and the reading literacy definitions in the Knowledge Promotion (LK06: 3). In the final chapter, I will present my answer to the thesis question as well as some suggestions to solve or improve the current situation.

1.1 Previous research on textbooks

The focus on textbook research in Norway has primarily been concerned about the content in the texts or the use of textbooks in one way or another. Further examples in the more theoretical approaches on textbook research are presented in the methodical chapter, this includes some of the ideas from *UNESCO's guidebook on textbook research and textbook revision* (Pingel: 1999). To put this thesis into context, it is important to point out that research within the area of literature didactics

has dispersed into several areas of expertise (Vestli, Elin Nesje: 9). Areas which may be mentioned in this thesis is research on the cannons, reading, literature history and didactics, textbook research and discipline history (ibid.). This thesis joins together several of these approaches and might be seen as a meeting between the previous textbook research and literary didactics. The overall resemblance this thesis shares with them is that the thesis focuses on the modern foreign-language tuition and especially the reading research in this field.

Ragnhild Lund at Vestfold University College has been in the forefront in Norway to address the use of textbooks in her doctorate dissertation *Questions of Culture and Context in English Language Textbooks. A Study of Textbooks for the Teaching of English in Norway. (Lund, Ragnhild: 2001)* The presented dissertation is just one of her many studies of the textbook, but it might also be the study with the most relevant finding for this thesis. The main finding in this dissertation is that teachers seemed to rely heavily on the texts and the instructions that are in the textbooks (ibid.). The results in Lund's doctoral dissertation and further publications show how important the quality of a textbook is.

Her impression on textbooks, and the focus on reading in them, is indirectly mentioned in an article named *A Hundred Years of English Teaching: A View of Some Textbooks.* Here she presents that the textbooks used in the Norwegian school has moved from an emphasis on the theoretical knowledge, to a drilling of useful structures and preparation for further reading, before the focus is shifted towards linguistic challenges (Lund 2002: 24). What I can deduct from this is that there has been a theoretical and linguistic focus in the textbook since the introduction of them in Norway, the main difference is that the challenges have lately been presented to the students in topics and texts that the students will find interesting and relevant (Lund 2002: 25).

A master thesis that addresses the use of textbooks reading and reading strategies is Linn Hovd Faye-Schjøll's master thesis. Her thesis addresses the use of textbooks and reading strategies at VG1 upper secondary in Norway and is titled *Reading in upper secondary; what do they read, how is it thought, and what are the teachers' attitudes towards the teaching of reading?* (Faye-Schjøll, 2009) One of the main findings in this thesis is that there was very little focus on reading activities in most of her informant's classes. She further found that most of her informants did not consciously work on reading strategies. The alarming factor was the lack of knowledge amongst the responding teachers about reading strategies in general. This is especially alarming if this reflects the teacher education and the focus on reading strategies in these institutions. She also found that most of the teachers "heavily rely on the textbooks and they rarely supplement it with texts of their own choice" (ibid.).

Besides the textbook, the only text of any specific length that was read by the students during the year was one novel that was given to the students as homework (ibid.). Besides this reading and an obligatory hand-in, novels were seldom given much attention or time in class (ibid.). The findings presented from Faye-Schjøll's master's thesis and Lund's doctoral dissertation are concerning and gives a strong incentive to investigate the impeding qualities of the textbooks that are used in the Norwegian compulsory and upper secondary schools.

A final report for a survey performed by Nordlandsforskning and J. Hodgson, W. Rønning and P. Tomlinson was published in May 2012, and presents interesting observations in the Norwegian school. The survey, named *The relationship between teaching and learning. Ways of working, development of skills and learning in Norwegian, science and social studies* (abbreviated SMUL) presented results that support many of the concerns that are addressed in the introducing chapter of this thesis (Hodgson, J., Rønning, W., Tomlinson, P., 2012).

One of the concerns presented in the report is that the survey data gives indications to support a view of a school where the students are frequently challenged with tasks that mostly involve identification, producing, registering words, conceptual development and facts (Hodgson et.al: 15). These are concepts that mostly explain the activities in the lowest reading levels. Reading level 1 and 2 are also introduced in this thesis as the efferent reading strategies. Although there should be a noticeable change in the teaching since the introduction of a new curriculum in 2007, there have been no evident changes that support the claim of any alterations, except for the attitude towards evaluation (ibid.). The survey further present data to claim that teachers give little room for a discussion of task answers and this further leaves the students with little support to develop and understanding for the subject matter (ibid.).

The report also show that the textbooks control a majority of the teaching, and that teachers often support their teaching on the textbooks available for their subject, as in Lund (2001) and Faye-Schøll's (2009) findings. It further presents that the focus is on subject knowledge, but that the teaching in general lacks a focus towards the development of basic skills, such as the basic skill of reading (Hodgson, et al: 15). All in all, the SMUL-report presents an attitude towards teaching that leaves the students with a superficial insight into the subject matter instead of a deeper understanding (ibid.).

Literary didactics and literary science are two allied subjects, and what this thesis contributes to the process is hopefully a greater awareness and relevant scrutiny of tools methodological such as the textbook tasks in order for students to reach the competence aims in the subject curriculum.

1.2 Previous research on reading literacy

The reading literacy of Norwegian students has been extensively investigated through national surveys as well as multinational researches such as Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). From the PISA survey only the part concerning reading literacy will be addressed as it is this part that is relevant for this thesis.

The findings through the previous research on reading literacy compared to our neighbouring countries show that the reading skills in Norwegian schools have been far below what is to be expected. PIRLS has mapped reading effort, reading skills and attitudes towards reading among students in fourth and fifth grade primary school. Compared to our neighbours like Sweden (10th), Denmark (15th) and Iceland (32th), the Norwegian average disappointed with a 35th place out of 45 countries in the survey (Daal, Victor, 2007). This result was also a minor step-back among the fourth graders that attended the PIRLS survey in 2006 compared to in 2001(Roe, A. & Solheim, R.G., 2007). These results were not promising for the status of the development of reading skills among the pupils and students in school. In fact, the result was the worst result of all OECD countries and portrayed a far from healthy image of the Norwegian school, despite the fact that the Norwegian pupils were among the youngest in that specific survey.

Since the introduction of the Knowledge Promotion, the Norwegian students have improved from the poor results in 2006. In the PISA survey of 2009, the results show that the Norwegian students have closed in on the gap between Norway and the neighbouring countries such as Denmark, Sweden and Iceland (Roe, A., 2010). Finland is still in a league of its own, but it is promising to see a healthy development in reading literacy among the Norwegian students since the introduction of the Knowledge Promotion. What still is less than satisfying is the rather unhealthy unequal division of skills between genders in the favour of the girls (ibid).

Considering how reading literacy has been neglected by many teachers due to what they often claim is a lack of time, as presented in the SMUL-report (Hodgson, et al.: 2012), Faye- Schjøll's thesis

(2009), the results presented by PISA and PIRLS combined with the awareness that reading is a neglected skill in school should have legitimise for a greater focus on reading literacy. Due to these disheartening results from all levels in Norwegian school there has been an effort from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research to counteract this negative trend with the national strategy launched in 2003, named *Make room for reading!*[2], but this strategy was terminated by the replacing government at the end of 2005 (Udir, 2003). What can be drawn as a summary from this paragraph is that research show that the average reading skill of the Norwegian students is lower than expected. Suggested reasons for why the average reading skill is not better might be linked to the research presented in paragraph 1.3 on previous textbook research and further strengthen the purpose of this thesis.

1.3 Chapter summary

The intention of this chapter has been to contextualise and legitimise the purpose of addressing the textbook tasks in relation to the development of reading as a foundation skill. Although there are small differences from textbook to textbook, the difference is not too decisive. It should therefore be realistic claim that the findings from this thesis should tell something about the quality of other textbook tasks and therefore also give indications to what textbook tasks might contribute to the process of developing reading literacy in general.

Reading has been presented in this chapter as a partially neglected part of the Norwegian compulsory (1-10) and upper-secondary school (11-13) on the basis of research by Lund (2001), the SMUL-report (Hodgson, et al, 2012), Faye-Schjøll (2009) and the results from PISA and PIRLS research reports. The development of the basic skills of reading is a skill that should not be limited by resources, but the presented research in this chapter suggests that it seems like it suffers due to a hectic schedule for most teachers. I would also like to suggest that it might be possible that the skill suffers because it is a quite complex skill that seldom is measured directly other than in national and multinational tests. Reasons for claiming this is that the highest reading levels have open answers that could make it difficult for a teacher to fairly draw the line between what is considered to be correct and what is wrong. It is further a skill that is not directly measured in exams, but only partially measured through the written or oral product students hand in. This might result in less focus on the skill, even though

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[2] My translation from the Norwegian; *Gi rom for lesing!*

the skill clearly benefits a student's written and oral performance as I will present in the theoretical chapter.

It is also presented in this chapter that there is not enough research that addresses the qualities of textbook tasks, especially when it comes to what reading response they promote. What is certain is that the textbooks are heavily relied on by teachers and they seem to follow the instructions in the textbooks according to Ragnhild Lund (2001) and the SMUL-report (Hodgson, et al., 2012). These mentioned points in the introduction chapter should strengthen, legitimise and make the purpose of this thesis current.

The approach to the thesis question and how this will be addressed is also presented in this chapter trough a thorough description of follow-up questions that have been made to break the thesis question into smaller sections. The relevant reading strategies and reading responses will be presented in the following theoretical chapter in order to legitimise the need for a variety of reading strategies and responses in textbook tasks in order to work towards the aims for the *foundation skill of reading*, due to the central position of textbooks in language teaching.

The supporting questions to the thesis question are:

1) *What is trained through the tasks according to relevant reading literacy theory?*
2) *What parts of the foundation skill of reading are developed through the tasks?*

Through these follow up questions I hope to get a thorough and clear discussion of the findings in this thesis. The first follow up question will be broken into four parts which are; *reading response, task answer, reading strategies* and *reading literacies*. These are all known concepts that are presented in the theoretical chapter in this thesis.

The second follow up question is based on what the tasks have a potential to develop according to the reading theories. Depending on which areas of reading literacy the textbook tasks train, it is possible to present an analysis of which of the PISA *reading levels,* ref. table 2.1 in the theoretical chapter, that are trained through the tasks. This question is also followed up with a discussion on how well the foundation skill of reading in the Knowledge Promotion is developed through the textbook tasks.

The aim is that a thorough and cross-checking process like this will operationalize the thesis question. To help me in this process I have made table 2.2 in the theoretical chapter, which should strengthen the reliability and validity of the analysis in this thesis.

CHAPTER 2: THEORY

This section of the thesis will address and present the relevant theories for this thesis. The focus is on reading literacy and the various strategies and responses that are involved in the reading process. The presented theories in this chapter are mostly based on Louise Rosenblatt (1978, 1998), H. G. Widdowson (1979), Claire Kramsch (1993), Guy Cook (2000) and Elisabeth Ibsen (2000). It is important to stress that reading is addressed according to Rosenblatt's view, which is explained in chapter *2.1 Reading Theories*. According to Rosenblatt's view, it is relevant to connect the development of students' competence in reading to textbook tasks.

It is also important to remember that the lines between the theories are not necessarily as rigid as they might seem in this chapter. It is more natural to consider them as reading literacy in a continuum and that the rigidity they might possess in this chapter is done in an attempt to explain the qualities of each reading level.

The reason why I commenced on this thesis was because of a combination of two events. The first reason was because of my disappointment towards the textbook tasks I experienced in the English classes I either had as a student or worked with as a substitute teacher. What I found less than satisfying was that the tasks seemed repetitive and that they also seemed to lack the ability to engage and motivate the student. That the tasks seemed repetitive was for me not only negative when it came to the potential motivation for the students, but the tasks did not tap into the possibilities that were in the texts they were made to explore. It would demand knowledge about professional development of reading literacy to customise a set of tasks that would tap into the potential of each text, but where is the line drawn between sufficient and insufficient when it comes to the quality of textbooks and textbook tasks? The tasks also seemed to have a function where the main purpose was to make sure that the students had read the text, rather than giving the students guidance and challenges to explore and develop their reading skills.

When students are presented with poems and texts from the top-shelf of the literary works in the target language, and afterwards are faced with tasks that promote a more or less superficial competence in literacy is for me a mockery of the knowledge that is present about modern language teaching and literary didactics. All too often I experienced the task questions as extinguishers of literary interest rather than promoters. The latter should in my opinion be the preferred path, but is this approach to literature just as easily assessed or possible to identify compared to the more instrumental approach?

It was not until I was introduced to the linguists such as Claire Kramsch (1993) and Guy Cook (2000) and their ideas of *aesthetic* and *efferent* reading response that the aim of my thesis came together. These terms will be addressed in the theoretical chapter, but the main features is that the *aesthetic* reading response is concerned with beauty of the text as well as the insight it might provide to the reader. Another feature which is important in *aesthetic* response is that it includes both a productive and receptive process (Ibsen and Wieland: 137). The *efferent* reading response is a more scientific approach to a text, than the aesthetic response. The *efferent* reading response gives the reader the skill of finding specific information that is presented clearly in the text, and the reading response is compared to reading a recipe or answering comprehension questions on a reading text (Kramsch: 123).

Below is table 2.2, which presents the reading theories and the assessment reading levels in a manner that makes it possible to see where they share some of the same approach to literature. This model is used in the analysis of the textbook tasks in this thesis, and also a part of the operationalization of the thesis question. In this chapter, there will be a closer description on each of these terms, but first there is a more general paragraph about reading in school.

Reading response	Task answer	Reading strategies	Reading literacy	Assessment reading level
Efferent tasks	Closed tasks	Intensive reading Bottom-up	Scanning	Level 1
			Skimming	Level 2
Semi-aesthetic tasks	Divergent			Level 3
Aesthetic tasks	Open-ended tasks	Extensive reading Top-down	Creative literacy	Level 4
			Critical literacy	Level 5

Table 2.2, Theoretical overview

2.1 Reading theories

Children today are expected to display literacy reading skills far beyond those measured in the past. As society becomes increasingly reliant on knowledge and information, what it means to be literate is changing rapidly. The future of today's students depend on how well they can comprehend and thoughtfully use a wide variety of texts, assess the credibility of sources and substance critically; and apply the knowledge they gain through reading to their personal, professional and civic lives. (Farstrup: 2005)

There are vast amounts of models and theories concerning the reading process. Some of these are more specific, while others are more general. Nevertheless they all are concerned about the process of reading, and the main goal of this chapter is to give an introduction to the models and theories that I find most suitable for this thesis due to how they explain and cover the majority of reading processes that are to be developed in the Norwegian EFL-classrooms. The connection between these models and theories can be said to be Louise Rosenblatt's *transactional model*. She is said to be quite influenced Dewey and Bentley's *Knowing and the Known*, where she also adopted the term 'transaction' from (Rosenblatt, Louise 1994: 16-18). What Rosenblatt's theories and this thesis also have in common is the concern for literature and English, which she taught for much or her life (Gourlay, Stephen: 6). Even though this thesis and Rosenblatt share a focus on the *literature*, there is also a common agreement on this area that it is not the type of text that matters, literary or scientific, but the stance of the reader in treating the text in one way or another (Gourlay: 7). That the response and utilisation of a text is more important what type of text is read, is also shared with H. G. Widdowson (Widdowson, H.G.: 171)**.**

Rosenblatt has remarked that our usual way of thinking, talking and writing about the activity of reading does not do justice to the event (Rosenblatt: 1994). The reading process is more a "dynamic and fluid process" which in many ways can be seen as an "interdependent relationship in time between a reader and part of the environment, a text" (Rosenblatt 1998: 887/888). Because of this relationship, it is hard to point out exactly when a reading process starts and ends. She further stresses that the typical view on reading as either a way of interpreting a text or producing a response in the reader is undermining the complexity of reading. According to Rosenblatt, readers bring their present concerns and their past experiences with them to the reading event (Rosenblatt 1994:12). This is one of the reasons why it is difficult to define when the reading process takes place.

What makes a difference according to Rosenblatt is the *purpose* of the reading, because a reader that seeks the *aesthetic* experience from the text can be said to have an experience with the text that is

interdependent from any time or place. A reader that seeks *efferent* information in a text will normally experience the reading to be limited to that specific event (Rosenblatt 1994: 12).

When observing her students in school, Rosenblatt was concerned about the "passive" position the students had to autonomous texts (Rosenblatt 1994: 12). An apathetic attitude is what I fear is the result for the Norwegian students when they are presented to literature and "told" how they are to interpret and experience the texts in an efferent approach to the text. The reason for why the *aesthetic* reading response seems to be needed is because of the motivational benefits in the reading process (Cook: 161). The necessity for an aesthetic response is further supported by PISA's definition of reading literacy, where it is pointed out that engaging with the text is in important part of reading as a foundation skill (PISA2006: 1). The *efferent* reading response the reading tool that a person uses to do everyday activities such as reading a recipe, finding information on a table or the main characters in a text (Kramsch: 123). The efferent reading response is based upon the reading strategies that provide the necessary information to go over into the more creative response that is the aesthetic. Without the knowledge of characters, setting, plot and other details from a text, a reader does not have the necessary information to ponder, reflect or engage in society, which are *aesthetic* reading responses. What is special with the aesthetic reading response, is that it opens for the personal response in relation to the text (PISA 2006: 10), which is the most natural response to literature and also important as a skill if a reading process aims to provide the reader with more than just additional information. Whether the reading is for *private*, *public*, *work* or *educational* purpose (PISA 2006: 10), it normally demands a span of reading literacy that starts with the efferent and extends over to the aesthetic reading response.

The need for the *aesthetic* response in addition to the *efferent* is because it is from the response between the text and the reader's previous experiences that the reader actively constructs a meaning according to Rosenblatt (Rosenblatt, 1994: 11).What happens is that the reader scans the page, and the symbols that are detected by the reader are tested to whether they can be fitted into the tentative framework of what the reader already has constructed a meaning of from the preceding portion of the text (Rosenblatt, 1998: 898). The different readers will attend to the stimuli presented by the text in different ways, and will therefore attend to the signs, symbols, feelings and referents and test for significance and meanings according to what they bring with them of previous knowledge to the reading experience (Rosenblatt, 1994:11, 1998:898). The context of this provides for the guiding framework that shapes the reader's responses to the text which is also known as the schemata (Rosenblatt, 1994: 75). From this response to the text, the reader, according to Rosenblatt, adopts a

stance towards the text to whether they are engaged or not. Rosenblatt also draw a line between aesthetic and efferent reading processes as she calls it (Rosenblatt1994: 23-25). Even though I have drawn a line between the efferent and the aesthetic reading response for this thesis, they are not that easy to separate as they are not types of different stance according to Rosenblatt. According to her view they should rather be seen as terms for positions in a continuum: that all reading involves to some degree both the aesthetic and the efferent stance (Rosenblatt1994: 23, 1998: 893-97). For this thesis, I have tried to draw a line between these reading responses in an effort to map the possible outcome from working with the analysed textbook tasks. In order to make it possible to separate the efferent and aesthetic, I have found it necessary to introduce the semi-aesthetic reading respons.

2.2.0 The main forms of reading response

In this chapter I will try to present the two main forms of reading response, the aesthetic and the efferent, and I will try to legitimise the need for a balance between these two in the textbook tasks. There are many theories on reading responses, and these might have different names, but how the student responds to text share so many resemblances that they will be joined under the terms aesthetic and efferent reading response. These terms have been made well known by a number of linguists such as C. Kramsch (1993), G. Cook (2000), L. Rosenblatt (1979, 1998) and E. Ibsen (2000). In order to analyse and discuss what form of reading response the tasks in the textbooks promote, there is a necessity to clarify the approaches we use when reading a text: the aesthetic and the efferent reading response.

2.2.1 The efferent response

The *efferent* reading-response is concerned with what the reader will carry away from the reading process and stems from the Latin word *effere*, which means "to carry away" (Rosenblatt, 1978: 15 in Kramsch: 123). Louise Rosenblatt describes efferent reading as a way of looking at the text on a scientific way, that means that the reader is weighting the empirical or/and theoretical in the text (ibid.). According to Kramsch, the efferent reading response can be described as:

> ...an essential skill if you need to know your way in a foreign city, how to bake a cake, how to be informed about daily news...or how to answer comprehension questions on a reading test. (Kramsch: 123).

Further examples of such a reading experience and response may be to skim and scan the text for "desired information, capitalise on the natural redundancy of a text and get clues from its context, recognize authorial intention and act upon it" (Kramsch: 177). Due to this utilitarian approach to the texts, there will be limitations to what the student will get out of this approach to literary texts in the long run according to Kramsch (ibid.). What this has to for teaching and language learning is that tasks that promote this approach to a text can therefore be seen as more suited early in the task sets. This might be as some form of warm-up tasks and

preparation for the tasks that are set to promote the expansion of the students' development, and therefore these tasks can be seen as the building of a much needed scaffold to assist the students' undeveloped schemata. The developing tasks are in the aesthetic dimension and should according to Ibsen follow after the efferent tasks (Ibsen & Wiland: 147). In other words one could compare the efferent tasks to a checklist before a journey. If the students only get to take part in the creation of the checklist, the students will lose out on the experience. But in order to be able to go on the aesthetic adventure it is necessary that they have scaffolded their understanding of the text through an efferent reading response before they embark on the aesthetic reading response. The scaffolding consists in the tasks that promote the efferent reading response.

The efferent experience with a text might, according to Rosenblatt (1978), be compared to a public experience. The reason for this is that the experienced part of the text when it is experiences in the efferent dimension is apparent on the text's "front page" or the tip of the iceberg, and is apparent for everyone and possible to read on the surface of the text (Rosenblatt 1978: 15). Rosenblatt's view on the efferent response is not that different from how Kramsch (1993) and Cook (2000) describe it. They share the acknowledgement that the efferent reading response has an important purpose. One of these purposes is to prepare students for the aesthetic dimension through tasks such as pre-reading activities that fill in the students absent schemata (Ibsen & Wiland: 139-140). The efferent reading response does therefore legitimate its position among textbook tasks, but the efferent reading response is according to the theories of Kramsch (1993) not the most beneficial when it comes to motivation nor the potential learning outcome (Kramsch: 123). Below is an example of a textbook task that promotes the efferent reading-response. This example is taken from one of the textbooks I have analysed for this thesis and it shows a task given to the play *Hamlet* in the textbook *Tapestry (1996)*.

> *Further work*
>
> *Although Shakespeare dominated the Elizabethan theatre, there were other great English playwrights during this era. Find out the names of some of them and tell about what they have written. (Tapestry: 204)*

As we can see from the tasks, there is a low taxonomy in these tasks that is far from pushing the students as the task is answered through scanning for the requested information, and this is

even done in external texts. The example tasks do not give the readers any incentives to handle the text at a deeper level.

2.2.2 The response in between; the Semi-Aesthetic

In this thesis I have seen the necessity of introducing a third alternative which have been named the *semi-aesthetic* reading-response. The reason for this was founded upon my experience that many of the tasks started out with a sentence that opened up for discussion and aesthetic reflection, but were closed and narrowed down into a more efferent task (Cook: 161). It was also done in an effort to categorise the tasks that could both be considered *aesthetic* and *efferent*, but could go either way without any specific guidance. Ibsen also points out that in order for the students to be able to respond to art, there is a need for knowledge of the craft behind (ibid.). This is why it is important with a combination of both the *efferent* and the *aesthetic* reading responses in the school.

How the semi-aesthetic tasks are used and responded to in a classroom and whether it will be promote the development of the efferent or the aesthetic reading response is more or less in the hands of the teachers. Therefore one may say that tasks that fall in under the qualities of the *semi-aesthetic* reading response have the ability of sharing the characteristics of both the efferent and the aesthetic reading responses, but how it turns out is in the hands of the teacher. The qualities of the semi-aesthetic tasks are in many ways resembling Lotman's analogy of a text being a partner in dialogue:

> Text and readership as it were seek mutual understanding. They 'adapt' to each other. A text behaves like a partner in dialogue: it re-orders itself (as far as its supply of structural indeterminacy allows) in the image of the readership. (Lotman: 80)

Just as with a dialogue, the reading response between a student and text is guided onto a fruitful or less fruitful path. This category is also included because there was a need for it in that it is not always that easy to draw a clear line between the efferent and the aesthetic as Rosenblatt has mentioned (Rosenblatt 1978: 15). If the students are asked to engage and respond in relation to the experiences from reading of a text, then the semi-aestetic tasks will be guided into an aesthetic response. The students will experience a text efferently if they are for instance asked to skim and scan the text for specific information or to go into it with an

intensive reading strategy. An example of a semi-aesthetic task is the following from the textbook *Bookmarks*:

Check your understanding

Horatio promises the dying Hamlet to explain the true story to the people. Write a short speech where Horatio announces the Prince's death and explains the sad events that led to his death. (Bookmarks: 266)

This task opens up the students' imagination, but closes in at the end with an efferent task as the divergent tasks qualities according to Cook. Not more than a small revision of the task could include both the productive and receptive sides of the aesthetic response, but as it is presented, the task would most likely promote an efferent reading response.

2.2.3 The aesthetic response

The term aesthetic descends from the Greek word *aisthethikos*, which means 'being capable of perception', or more precisely 'I feel' or 'I perceive' (Ibsen & Wiland: 137). The responsibility of the school goes beyond the reproductive learning. The Norwegian primary and secondary school has also the responsibility for the students' acquisition of qualities that may help them in the development of becoming resourceful individuals in a democratic society. According to Ibsen, a strong impression from being exposed to good works of art leads to a need for communication (Ibsen & Wiland: 139). Since the foundation skills of the subjects in the Norwegian school are all related to communication, the incentive for exposing the students to subjects that promote an aesthetic response should be an obvious path. The development of a foundation skill, such as reading, is also relevant for the general part of the curriculum and for the subject. The general part of the curriculum has aims that are important for the society, as it aims after skills that make a person to a resourceful individual in a democratic society. In order to reach the aims of both the general part of the curriculum as well as the overall aims for English as a subject, the student has to develop the reading literacy that is within the aesthetic reading response.

The *aesthetic* response, compared to the efferent, is far more favoured by linguists like Guy Cook (2000) and H.G. Widdowson (1979), and is most often distinguished by its ability to open up for the reader's emotions and arrange for the reader to reflect and ponder on his/her

experience of the text. This need for knowledge is linked to the students' incomplete schemata as mentioned previously in this thesis. The aesthetic dimension holds many attractive qualities, such as the ability to reflect, to be impressed, to inform, to grow, to develop and to react upon the experience with a written text such as in the description of the skill below:

Aesthetics is also concerned with the beauty and value of art and the way art impresses us and gives a sense of insight. Aesthetics implies both knowledge and knowing. Aesthetics also covers both productive and receptive process. (Ibsen & Wiland: 137)

The strongest card for including aesthetic responses in school is how it plays on the innate. Widdowson (1979) and Kramsch (1993) also points out the importance of aesthetic reading response in order to legitimize the use of authentic literature in language learning. The reason for this is that "the authentic literature requires the participant to respond with behaviour that would be regarded as socially appropriate to the setting, the status of interlocutors, the purpose, key, genre and instrumentalities of the exchange, and the norms of interaction agreed upon by native speakers" (Kramsch: 178). If we are to approach literary texts the same way we are approaching a news article when it comes to reading response, the purpose of using a piece of literary text will be absent (ibid).

The private experience is what has to be discovered in between the lines and interpreted according to the context it is in and according to the reader's previous knowledge. If we are to continue to use literature that is authentic in this manner, we have to be aware of our didactical choices on how to exploit the possibilities within the text. Otherwise the use of literature will only be a display of a language that in worst case "could be over the students' ability to actually grasp" (Widdowson: 171). An example of a task that promotes an aesthetic reading response is the following from the short story *Hills Like White Elephants* in the textbook *Impressions (R94).*

Plot and character

To exploit the open ending a "hot seat" technique can be used. One student is seated in front of the class and answers questions in roles as "the American" or "Jig". Examples of questions to "the American": Why are you unwilling to have a child? Do you really believe that everything will be the same if she has an abortion? Two pupils may share the same role; that adds richness to the interpretation. A boy may well play the role of "Jig" and a girl "the American". (Bårtvedt, A. Ibsen, E., & Despard, A., 1996: 22)

The difference between aesthetic and efferent reading response, can be described by the terms *open-ended* tasks, *closed* tasks and *divergent* tasks (Cook, 161). The efferent reading response would most commonly be placed as a closed task, as these forms of tasks do not have any alternative answer, only one correct. The task that might be most in line with the aesthetic is the 'open-ended' tasks, which has no final answer. The open ended form of tasks gives the students the most room to touch upon what they felt by reading the text (ibid.). Cook also says that the 'divergent' tasks fall under the aesthetic banner, but it also holds some of the efferent qualities. Because of this, the divergent task answer will be compared to, and referred under the new term semi-aesthetic that I will introduce in the following paragraph.

2.3.1 Top-down and bottom-up reading

According to Kramsch (1993), recent psycholinguistic research has influenced eager teachers to apply knowledge to their teaching without fully understanding the implications (Kramsch: 10). According to Elisabeth Ibsen, the most commonly applied reading strategy in a foreign language class in Norway is the *bottom-up* strategy. This is identified as having a purpose of decoding the written symbols on a page into something that gives meaning to the reader. Ibsen has illustrated the process of the bottom-up strategy like this (Ibsen & Wiland: 189):

Figure 2.1, Bottom-up reading strategy

The presented reading process above can be described as a quite pedantic approach to a text, where every single letter, word, sentence is deciphered and decoded in order to create

meaning in the text (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). Because of this approach to a text, the result is that the length of the texts used in school is preferred to be brief in order to be able to go into the details of the text due to the alleged "time pressure" in the Norwegian school (ibid.).

The *top-down* model is different from the bottom-up model in the sense that it is focused on the reading process instead of the text (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). The characteristics of the top-down reading strategy is that it strengthens the construction of meaning as an interaction between the text and the reader instead of trying to approach the text as in the bottom-up strategy where the decoding of form is in centre as we can see in figure2.1, borrowed from Ibsen and Wiland (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). What is important to remember is that even though these processes may be described by researchers, it does not necessarily transfer into teaching as easily (Kramsch: 11). The reason for this is that two students might see the context in a text quite differently even though they have the same language. The interaction between form and meanings is therefore dependent on the context and how this context is interpreted by the reader.

Past experience, language institutions and expectations → Selective aspects of print → Meaning → Sound, pronunciation if necessary

Figure 2.2, Top-down reading strategy

What we can see from this figure is that the reading process starts before the reader can see the text with what they have learned before. This previous knowledge will make the reading process different from one reader to another, and therefore each reader will have the possibility to understand and interpret each text in their own little unique way. The top-down

reading strategy points out the interaction between the reader and the text as the essential in the reading process (Ibsen & Wiland: 189/90). As there is always elements of the efferent in the aesthetic and vice versa, there should always be elements of both of the reading strategies although one is in focus. The *top-down* and *bottom-up* processes are often taught and presented to the students separately, but this should not be done according to Kramsch, because they should not be separated. Instead they should treat the strategies so that the students learn to see the interaction between them (Kramsch: 10).

One technique to help the students exploit the approach of the top-down reading strategies is pre-reading techniques. This approach to literature where pre-reading techniques that give the students various cognitive and affective kinds of challenges have now become an integral part of most English textbooks according to Ibsen. Whether this observation by Ibsen is correct or not for the *English Literature and Culture* textbooks in Norway will be addressed later on in the thesis. Pre-reading activities to the literature is not unisonously appreciated by all teachers. Some claim that this approach to literature is a "downgrading of the literary text itself and the inherent power of art to communicate its own right" (ibid.). Kramsch (1993) further stresses the reason for why the teaching of this interaction between the bottom-up and top-down processes is important:

> Given that language teachers have to teach both a normative linguistic system and its variable instances of use, attention to context calls for a type of pedagogy that fosters both direct and indirect ways of transmitting knowledge, that values not only facts but relations between facts, that encourages diversity of experience and reflection on that diversity (Kramsch: 11).

As presented, a variation is needed in order for the students to acquire a consciousness around the two approaches. Without this consciousness the students will probably not learn to select the most suitable approach to each task and therefore not be able to utilise the reading strategies of the bottom-up and top-down approaches.

2.3.2 Intensive and extensive reading

The *Intensive* and *extensive* reading strategies are further two forms of reading strategies that have characteristics in common with the bottom-up and top-down reading approaches. The intensive reading strategy shares characteristics with the bottom-up reading approach as it seeks to gain as much information and detail as possible (Scrivener: 188). What characterises this form of reading is that the texts are read closely and carefully with a clear purpose of

understanding as much as possible from that activity. Even though this is not a natural way to read texts such as novels, articles or poems, students are often asked to process such material with true/false and other comprehension questions afterwards in order to check if they have understood the content of the specific text (Scrivener: 188).

The extensive reading strategy resembles more the reading in a person's everyday life with its faster, fluent reading of often longer texts that are read for pleasure, entertainment and general understanding. Here the details are not normally noticed as much as in the intensive reading and words or details that are not understood at once will be skipped and at best returned to later (Scrivener: 188-189). This form of reading, as the extensive, is supported by a great deal of evidence to have an impact on language learning (ibid.). The reason for this is that extensive reading strategies expose the reader to a great variety of grammar and vocabulary which is attained automatically as a result of exposure to the language, and this influences other language skills (ibid.).

2.4.1 Skimming and scanning

There are many activities in textbooks that are designed to increase reading speeds. They either promote the skill of reading quickly and for the student to get the gist of a passage or to read quickly and to find a specific piece of information (Scrivener, Jim: 185). The first of these alternatives is known as *skimming*. What characterises tasks that promote skimming is how they are fixed upon finding key topics, main ideas, an overall theme or a basic structure (ibid.). Typical questions that promote skimming would be: "Is the story situated in a city or on the countryside?" and "Does she dream about a cat or a horse?" (ibid.). These tasks ask for a form of information that does not depend on any knowledge of the text, but is possible to find and answer by using key words that are in the question such as city and countryside.

The second of these two reading approaches is known as *scanning* and can be recognised with the feature of promoting a search for specific individual information such as names, addresses, facts, prices, numbers and dates (Scrivener: 185). The reader does not go into the text and read from the start in order to scan for information, but the process involves the whole text at first and then the content enables the reader to focus in on a smaller section of the texts where it is likely to retrieve the wanted information from.

These strategies are mainly taught and used to increase reading speed. The strategies are also suitable for the lower reading levels where the students are to *decode* words. These strategies are further quite resembling to the qualities of the *efferent* reading response where the reading experience is similar to understanding a cooking recipe or reading a map (Kramsch: 123).

2.4.2 Creative and critical literacy

Critical literacy is a term with many definitions. Most of the definitions resemble each other, and the definitions are often more or less the same, but with different words. In this thesis I will address critical literacy in the manner of how Luke and Freebody (1997) have defined the term. They see critical literacy as a critique of the text and how it works. What they mean by this is that the reading of a text in this manner includes "an awareness of how, why and in whose interest particular texts might work" (Luke & Freebody: 218). As mentioned, there are other theories and descriptions of the term, but the overall agreement is that the reader reaches a level of reading where it is able to question the content in a text. This might be from asking questions such as "In whose interest is the text?", "what is the text about? How do we know?", "do images and text suggest the same, or is there a conflict?" to "what has been left out in the text?"(Wilson: Fr.spr.senteret.no). Approaching a text like Luke and Freebody (1997) suggests, would make the students participants in the creation of meaning in the text. This way, the text would be used more in the manner like it is suggested under paragraph 2.2.2 about *aesthetic* reading. The use of an authentic text in a classroom would further move away from the dreaded 'display purpose', as Cook (2000) warned about, and over to the intended use of the text.

Creative and *critical* literacy are considered to be the highest forms of reading and these are fundamented upon the ability to infer. The cognitive resources and previous knowledge of the student is the main tools in reading literacies as the creative and the critical literacy. Dan Willingham stresses that it is not the strategies that teaches reading, but it is what you have read before (Willingham: 2). The students reading comprehension is however something that occurs in the meeting between the student and the text, quite similar to how Rosenblatt has explained reading (Rosenblatt 1994: 11). The dimension where the students are able to read creatively and critically holds many qualities in common with Piaget's constructivist idea

(Fretheim: 11). The more the students knows from previous activities, and the more organised this knowledge is, the more it will strengthen the students' learning potential (ibid.).

The overall aims for the basic skill of reading in the syllabus for *VG3 English literature and culture* are, like most subjects in the LK06 syllabus, quite demanding and show the need for students with a wide range of reading skills and strategies. In order to be able to access the information, show the necessary understanding, interpretation as well as reflection and assessment that show that the students hold the skills seeked after, the students have to develop reading strategies in order to access the information that is requested from a task. This form of reading is accessed through the cognitive resources and the previous knowledge of the reader, often referred to as the *infernal* understanding of the reader (Fredheim: 11). The necessity of developing this reading skill is growing is the same pace of the information society we live in today. It is important for the students to develop reading skills that makes them able to not only retrieve information from a text, but provide them with the literacy to ponder and assess around the quality of the content. It is important to have the ability to assess the quality, validity, political views and purpose of the text among other, which are essential skills for the students if they are to become resourceful persons that contribute to our democratic society.

2.5.0 PISA reading levels

In order to be able to read at the highest levels, the students should be presented tasks and challenges in class, so that they are given the opportunity to develop a reading skill that enables them to access information from *level 1* to *level 5*. The development of reading skills is a crucial tool that might benefit the student in addition to reading, such as grammatical skills, written skills and development of vocabulary as pointed out by Dan Willingham (Willingham: 2). My personal experience is that the students are often quite well equipped at the lower reading levels, but even the stronger students often struggle with *level 4* and *5*. In order to give the reader of this thesis the insight into the complexity of the reading levels I will present the levels in the PISA Reading Framework of 2006:

	Retrieving information	**Interpreting texts**	**Reflection and evaluation**
Level 1	Locate one or more independent pieces of explicitly stated information, typically meeting a single criterion, with little or no competing information in the text.	Recognise the main theme or author's purpose in a text about a familiar topic, when the required information in the text is not prominent.	Make a simple connection between information in the text and common, everyday knowledge.
Level 2	Locate one or more pieces of information, each of which may be required to meet multiple criteria. Deal with competing information.	Identify the main idea in a text, understand relationships, form or apply simple categories, or construe meaning within a limited part of the text when the information is not prominent and low-level inferences are required.	Identify the main idea in a text, understand relationships, form or apply simple categories, or construe meaning within a limited part of the text when the information is not prominent and low-level inferences are required.
Level 3	Locate, and in some cases recognise the relationship between pieces of information, each of which may need to meet multiple criteria. Deal with prominent competing information.	Integrate several parts of a text in order to identify a main idea, understand a relationship or construe the meaning of a word or phrase. Compare, contrast or categorise taking many criteria into account. Deal with competing information.	Make connections or comparisons, give explanations, or evaluate a feature of text. Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the text in relation to familiar, everyday knowledge, or draw on less common knowledge.
Level 4	Locate and possibly sequence or combine multiple pieces of embedded information, each of which may need to meet multiple criteria, in a text with familiar context or form. Infer which information in the text is relevant to the task.	Use a high level of text-based inference to understand and apply categories in an unfamiliar context, and to construe the meaning of a section of text by taking into account the text as a whole. Deal with ambiguities, ideas that are contrary to expectation and ideas that are negatively worded.	Use formal or public knowledge to hypothesise about or critically evaluate a text. Show accurate understanding of long or complex texts. .
Level 5	Locate and possibly sequence or combine multiple pieces of deeply embedded information, some of which may be outside the main body of the text. Infer which information in the text is relevant to the task. Deal with highly plausible and/or extensive competing information.	Either construe the meaning of nuanced language or demonstrate a full and detailed understanding of a text.	Critically evaluate or hypothesise, drawing on specialised knowledge. Deal with concepts that are contrary to expectations and draw on a deep understanding of long or complex texts.

Table 2.1: Based on Figure 2.9 *Reading literacy levels map* (Pisa 2006: 17)

Reading literacy is, as we can see from table 2.1, a quite advanced skill. If the students in the Norwegian school are to develop the skill according to the reading levels they are tested in,

then it is important that textbook tasks among other tools in school provide the challenges that might provide such a specific skill as the reading skill has been presented as in this thesis.

2.6.0 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to present the relevant theories for this thesis concerning reading responses and strategies. As presented, the two main forms of reading-response are the aesthetic and the efferent reading response.

How these forms of reading-response may be distinguished in the tasks is often due to the reader experience of the text, that will say if it is a more superficial (efferent) or personal (aesthetic) experience with the text. A third option for tasks and reading responses were also presented as the semi-aesthetic. What distinguished this form of task and response is that there is an aesthetic quality residing in a task that most often will be addressed efferently by students and teachers, as shown with the presented task in the paragraph on the semi-aesthetic response.

In order to explain the efferent, semi-aesthetic and aesthetic responses, there are other theories such as the theories concerning task answers (closed, divergent and open-ended tasks) that have been addressed in this chapter. The difference between intensive and extensive reading, as well as top-down and bottom-up reading strategies have also been addressed in order to explain the complexity of reading, but first and foremost explain the reading levels more specific with theories in addition to the swift descriptions that are in table 2.1.

Skimming, scanning, creative literacy and critical literacy are further presented to explain the activity of the student in each of the five reading levels that are used in the national tests. Hopefully this will make it clearer for the reader of this thesis.

How the theories are connected and which of the reading skills and responses that develop the various reading level skill has been presented previously in this chapter in table 2.2. This table and the theories in it, and this chapter, will be used in the analysis of the textbook tasks in this thesis.

In the next chapter I will describe my methodical approach and datacollection in order to answer my thesis question.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

In this thesis I have used a qualitative method to answer my thesis question. This aim with this chapter is to explain why the qualitative approach was the only option of methodologies to answer the thesis question.

Textbook analysis has been, and is, quite an untouched field compared to other research areas concerning school didactics and pedagogies. There is a consensus between the researchers in the field, that there is much work to be done in order to get an up to date outline of the textbook's influence on learning.

Author of the *UNESCO guidebook on textbook research and textbook revision* Frank Pingel (1999) and Peter Weinbrenner (1992) the author of *Methodologies of Textbook Analysis used to date* both stresses the missing research on the textbooks used in school. According to Weinbrenner (1992) there is a need to gain more theoretical knowledge onto how a textbook should be constructed and that the only area that is sufficiently theorised in school research at the moment is how to construct solid methodologies (Weinbrenner: 21). As we see from their reports, this is not just an issue concerning textbooks used in the Norwegian school, but relevant for most textbook authors, teachers and others concerned with the development in schools in general. Weinbrenner (1992) further stresses that there are what he calls "empirical limitations"; that we although with years of research on school continue to know very little about how the use of textbooks in school influence the students learning (Weinbrenner: 22).

The forms of textbook analysis that have gained attention over the latter years are linguistic analysis where the researchers have tried to uncover a specific use of terminology and controversial messages (Pingel, 1999). There have also been performed cross-cultural analyses in order to unveil if the textbook author has presented any topic in a specifically partial way. Furthermore, the methodical approaches to discourse analysis also reveal if the textbook author show any signs of favouring any specific group or event with how they are presented in specific textbooks. There has also been some eventuality analysis of textbooks lately in order to combine qualitative and quantitative analysis in relation to text and pictures (ibid.). This thesis might be seen as a mixture between several of these methods as it does not only investigate the reading response which the tasks promote, but also considers how this influences the intended learning outcome for the students.

The first paragraph in this chapter will address the preparation for this thesis and the methodical design. The second paragraph is a presentation of my choice of texts and tasks for the analysis in this thesis. The third part of this chapter will address the process of the analysis. The following chapter will be a present and discuss why the analysis in this thesis is reliable and valid.

3.1 Preparation

The research process for this thesis has a qualitative research design, which is a methodical approach that describes the analysed material with words instead of numbers. The qualitative research design is known as a flexible method. Due to this flexibility, the collection of textbooks, the selection of the tasks and the analysis of the tasks have been a *circular* and not a linear process. The difference between a linear and the circular process is that in a linear research process the collection happen first and the analysis afterwards, but in a circular process the analysis and selection of tasks happens as a result of each other (Thagaard, Tove: 30). According to Thagaard (2009), the circular process is an identifiable feature that also should be exploited when a quantitative method is applied in a thesis (Thagaard, Tove: 30).

For this thesis the movement between finding theory, and moving over to the analysis of textbook tasks, and then moving back to the search of theory in order to explain findings that were done and back again to the analysis has been a process that has continued from the start to the end of this thesis. This process has not only provided me as a researcher with more insight, but it has also corrected and steered me into a more correct path.

The analysis and selection of textbooks and tasks has shaped and formed the purpose in a hermeneutical process. In this thesis I have used a hermeneutical process, I have not followed the more common linear four steps of research processes that are: preparation, collecting data, analysis and report (Johannessen, Tufte & Kristoffersen, 2006: 37). My research in this thesis has instead been coloured by the mentioned circular movement between the mentioned four steps. That the four steps of the research process have influenced each other characterises the research process of the hermeneutic method (ibid.), and hopefully this hermeneutical process of this thesis will be clear after reading this chapter.

I narrowed down the scope of my research topic in a pre-test to this thesis to textbook tasks since this seemed is a field where research appeared to be missing. I found very little classroom research about student learning outcome from working with textbook tasks in textbooks used by Norwegian students in English. This gave me a stronger incentive to address this area, since it is a field yet to be unveiled.

The following step was that I ran the test on two textbooks intended for the VG1 English Programme for Specialisation for General Studies in the Knowledge Promotion. This was done the spring of 2010 as a compulsive hand-in for a methodical subject in my master's programme of English and foreign language didactics at NTNU.

I addressed the tasks for both authentic and constructed literature. The category *constructed texts* was the category of texts made by the textbook authors for L2 speakers, which are often found in textbooks used in Norwegian schools. These texts and are often written for a specific language level, and are most often biographies and texts about culture, sports, travel etc. (Simensen: 171). In this thesis I chose to only analyse textbook tasks for texts that have been made for L1 speakers. One of the main reasons for this is that there were only minor differences between the tasks reading responses to the two types of texts in the pre-test.

I found that the textbook tasks seemed to focus on the reproductive reading literacy skills in the subject's curricula, and that the tasks would not have been sufficient for developing reading literacy without additional tasks to stimulate the development of the more complex reading literacy skills in the syllable in the curricula. In many ways this pre-test hinted towards a focus on level 1 and 2 reading.

Due to my research findings in the pre-test, this thesis can contribute to shed a light on the quality that resides in the textbook tasks. Thus hopefully detect the strengths and weaknesses in methodological approaches to students' development of reading literacy.

For this thesis I initially analysed ten tasks made for textbooks that were tailored for both the R94 syllabus and the Knowledge Promotion. However, this only left me with a superficial and uncontrollable amount of task sets that were similar, and as a result of the circular research process, I decided that the amount of tasks and the focus on textbooks made for the Knowledge promotion would fit the thesis question better and also make the thesis more accessible to the reader.

3.1.1 The choice of a qualitative research method

In order to answer the thesis question I also made two supporting questions that could guide me through the analysis of the tasks in this thesis. The questions are:

1) What is trained through the tasks according to relevant reading literacy theory?
2) What parts of the foundation skill of reading are developed through the tasks?

I have chosen to analyse the quality of a selection of textbook tasks against reading literacy theory and reading as a foundation skill. Because I have selected to gather the information in order to answer the thesis question, the research method which is applied in this thesis is the qualitative method. The supporting questions are used in this thesis to strengthen the operationalization of the thesis question. The analysis is further strengthened by the circular process (described in figure 3.1) I have been through to access the material that is presented in the analysis chapter. The selection of data for the textbook analysis has been a result of the hermeneutical process that eventually ended in the final thesis question.

One of the methods I considered interesting in the start phase of this thesis was interviews with users of the analysed textbooks (students and teachers) as well as the authors. The reason why I excluded the interview with students and teachers was the potential lack of value in the possible answers. What I mean by this is that one might get the answer for what the student believe is best for their development in the subject and it would not necessarily give an answer to what the tasks bring to their development of the reading literacy.

Interviews could also be more connected to motivation and interest in relation to the students' experience from working with the presented tasks. Therefore an interview would probably not present an answer to the thesis statement. The answers from interviews could be interesting information to collect pre and post a longer trial in comparing classes where one class worked with the textbook tasks as they are, and the other with more aesthetic tasks.

The Hermeneutic method

All forms of text analysis have been originally considered to be hermeneutics (Thagaard: 39). The aim for the hermeneutical text analysis is to interpret a valid understanding of the text (ibid.). In this situation it is to understand a valid form of reading response which is promoted in the textbook tasks. According to Clifford Geertz, the method of a thesis should either strive to present a *dense* description of the phenomenon. A dense description also includes

information of what the informant has meant with his/her actions, the interpretations from the informant and the researcher (Geertz in Thagaard: 39). It is important to stress that Geertz means that the opinions come from other literature, which in this thesis is the theoretical literature. Every interpretation is a result of the researcher's previous knowledge, and the difference between a good and less good interpretation is one that "fits" with the observation (ibid.). This is a contrast to the *thin* analysis which only describes the observations (ibid.). This thesis holds more of the characteristics in common with the *dense* description as the meanings that are explained and used in the analysis springs from the theories and research presented in the theoretical chapter.

The hermeneutic process is used to change and expand our perception and understanding through an interpretive process (Thagaard: 39). This was one of the legitimating reasons for using this methodical approach for the analysis in this thesis.

3.1.2 Choice of research design

The selected research design for this thesis is the hermeneutic method. The characteristics of the hermeneutic method will be further explained in this chapter, but the most striking feature is that the hermeneutic circle is used to change and expand our perception and understanding through an interpretive process (Thagaard: 39).

The hermeneutic method is normally the preferred method when the purpose is to form a whole impression of the content and presentation of either a specific book or a group of books (Angvik, Magne: 374).

I also tried to apply Frank Pingel's 'List of Criteria for Analysis', the author of *UNESCO's guidebook on textbook research and textbook revision* (Pingel, Frank: 48). However, I experienced this approach to be better suited for textbook analysis addressing the content in a text more than the promotion of reading literacy in the textbook tasks.

In this thesis, the method for analysing the textbook tasks had to suit the topic sentence of this thesis. In an effort to retrieve information with validity and reliability, and answer specifically what the thesis question asked for, I made table 2.2 in order to operationalize the thesis question and strengthen the analysis in this thesis.

3.2 Collecting data

The following paragraph will address the choices that were made in the selection of textbooks and textbook tasks for the analysis in this thesis. The aim of this paragraph is to present the process of selecting the material for the analysis in order to make the process open and clear. The first part will address the choice of textbooks and the second part will address the selection of texts and task-sets.

3.2.1 Choosing textbooks

The most natural and interesting approach for me was to investigate the textbooks that are used for one of the respective subjects at the VG3 level. I chose textbooks for *English Literature and Culture* in the VG3 level of the General Studies as the research field for this thesis. The course for which the textbooks are made is the most advanced English subject at the Norwegian upper secondary school and should therefore prepare students studies at university level.

Textbooks for *VG3 English Literature and Culture* contain the large amount of authentic texts. The authentic literature holds a great amount of qualities that normally promote aesthetic reading response outside the educational sphere of a classroom. If this response is untapped in a classroom, then the use of authentic texts would be diminished to a display-purpose. There is a bigger purpose when great literature is included in textbooks beyond just experiencing the texts. Most of the greater literature holds a message that is connected to the culture of the time it was written, and as Widdowson (1979) points out, it is important that teachers remember their pedagogic responsibility (Widdowson: 171). Since the competence aims of the selected subject anticipate a response to the text similar to the aesthetic response, the textbook tasks should not just promote the efferent, but also have some elements of the aesthetic response to them. According to the descriptions of the reading literacy aim of the foundation skill for the selected subject, the student is expected to be able to *explore* and *ponder* to gain insight across cultures and special fields (LK06: 3). The description of the foundation skill of reading further aims states that the students *are* to develop the ability to choose a suitable reading strategy for the intended purpose. Whether the tasks are sufficient tools towards the foundation skill or not, is followed up by the supporting questions to the thesis question. These are made to control whether the presented reading literacies are trained

and whether the aims in the description of the foundation skill are trained and if the five reading levels of PISA assessment report are trained.

The selected textbooks for this thesis

The selected textbooks for this thesis are all from the Knowledge Promotion of 2006 (LK06). The reason for this choice has been to focus on the quality of textbooks that are currently in use. The awareness of their qualities might benefit the users more than a study of textbooks that are outdated. The selected textbooks for this thesis are:

1. Access to English: Literature By: Anthony, J. et.al. (2008) Oslo: Cappelen
2. Impressions By: Despard, A. Ibsen, E. (2008) Oslo: Aschehoug

The textbooks are presented in this order in the analysis and results chapter where there will also be a presentation of how the authors of the textbook present the textbook in the introductions to each of the textbooks. In the presentation of the textbooks, I have only presented the sides and qualities of the textbooks which are of interest to the research question of my thesis.

3.2.2 Selecting textbook tasks

The selection of the textbook tasks for this thesis was based on two criteria:

- I should preferably know the text to the selected set of tasks.
- There should be a variation between novel excerpts, poems, plays and short stories.

The reason for these criteria are because of the economic aspect of time, I should preferably know the texts content and therefore have a greater premise to evaluate the utilization of the texts in the posed textbook.

The variation between novel excerpts, poems, plays and short stories is chosen to see how these different forms of authentic literature are treated. This is a difference between the literary texts and the more scientific texts or constructed texts for the textbooks, which are more often written to give specific information and are therefore also more often read in the efferent dimension. I chose to only include literary texts from the target language in this

thesis. Since the literary texts should, in my mind promote both efferent and aesthetic reading responses in the final subject at upper secondary I hoped with this choice to reveal the extreme point of what the students have learned of reading strategies after thirteen years of English at the Norwegian compulsory (1-10) and upper secondary school (11-13).

I decided to analyse two task sets from each textbook which are:

1. Access to English: Literature - *Hills Like White Elephants* by Ernes Hemingway
2. Impressions - *Gulliver's Travel* by Jonathan Swift

3.3 The analysis model

The textbook analysis in this thesis is based upon the hermeneutic analysis and can be described as a circular movement or dialogue between the tasks, the texts and the categories that are listed below.
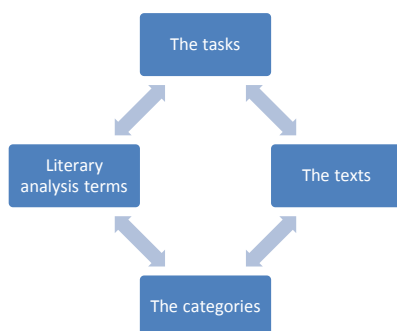
Figure 3.1, analysis model

Textbook analysis with the qualitative approach to analysis has been accused of being insufficiently theorised (Weinbrenner: 21). Because the methodology in textbook analysis is where it is today, it has been a necessity to present and explain all decisions that have been made in a systematic manner to present my methodical reflections in the process of this thesis. Hermeneutics are further known for not having prescriptive approaches to the data analysis as other empirically based forms of methods (Thagaard: 39).

The categories

In an effort to strengthen the analysis for this thesis I have analysed the tasks as either an *efferent, semi-aesthetic or aesthetic* and further broken these categories down into PISA's five reading levels as presented in chapter 2.0 in this thesis.

I have further analysed the tasks according to the various categories of reading responses, task answers, reading strategies, reading literacy and reading assessment levels as presented in table 2.2:

Reading response	Task answer	Reading strategies	Reading literacy	Assessment reading level
Efferent tasks	Closed tasks	Intensive reading Bottom-up	Scanning	Level 1
			Skimming	Level 2
Semi-aesthetic tasks	Divergent			Level 3
Aesthetic tasks	Open-ended tasks	Extensive reading Top-down	Creative literacy	Level 4
			Critical literacy	Level 5

Table 2.2, Theoretical overview

These characteristics are presented in the theoretical chapter of this thesis. Categorizing of the tasks is based upon the theories of among others Kramsch (1993), Ibsen (2000) Cook (2000) as described in the theoretical chapter of this thesis. In addition the categories are further specified by the levels of reading competence which are used in the PISA survey.

Literary analysis terms

The analysis of the tasks is further a result of the methodical approaches to literature that is common in textbooks.The methodical approach to the analyseded tasks is according to how literature is approached in school, with the development of knowledge around the character, plot, setting, theme and imagery in the text. How the tasks address these terms and what the tasks ask of the students is deciding which of the reading literacies that are being trained. How accessible this information is for the reader, will determine which of the reading levels the students are challenged in. If the text or task has scaffolding information to support the student, this information can alter the reading level and the reading level which the student is challenged in is depending on the scaffold, the text and what the task asks for of information.

The plot is known as telling the reader about when things happen in a text in an ordered and organized way (Hawthorne, J: 111). Tasks under the term plot are concerned with the order, ellipses, duration and frequency of the text, and the students are to answer questions that either show their knowledge around these terms or the students ability to refer to scaffolding information that is supporting the text or tasks (Hawthorne, J: 112-113). The students are also asked around the purpose of the plot, what type of plot there is and whether there is a main plot or sub-plots (Hawthorne, J: 117).

The setting is further something the students are being asked about when faced with literature in the classroom. Information the students need to know here is what the setting might have to say for the theme of the text. The students should show some competence between the various sorts of setting, from realistic and conventional to stylized setting, and what this might have to say for the text (Hawthorne, J: 120). The students should also know something about what the setting might create of mood or moral environment in a text (Hawthorne, J: 121).

The theme of the text is probably one of the most used terms when literature is discussed in the classroom and is typically addressed in essays and examinations (Hawthorne, J: 121-122). The challenging part for the students when working with the theme in a text is the ability to find and to know the difference between overt and covert themes, and to discuss around this.

Imagery and symbols in a text is further one of the literary techniques that are asked for in textbook tasks. The difficult part here is when the symbols exist on two levels, both in the real world and in a symbolic level (Hawthorne, J: 123). The challenge for the students is again based on what the tasks ask for, is it about finding the imagery or is the task asking the students to discuss and reflect around what the imagery might have to say for the text and the readers' experience of the text.

The texts

Another part of the analysis is the texts that the tasks are made for. What resides in the texts of potential knowledge and challenges, and what the tasks ask of the students is relevant to discuss in relation to the development of the reading literacy foundation aim. It is also taken into consideration what the textbook authors has presented in the preface to the textbooks of where the textbook has its focus.

The tasks

The final element in the analysis is the tasks and what is asked of the student through the tasks. How the tasks are presented to the student and what the task ask of the student will be assessed against the presented reading theories in chapter 2, and each task will be labored according to which of the reading responses they promote. To support the outcome of the analysis, I have also used the other categories in table 2.2 to support and strengthen the analysis outcome.

3.4 Reliability and validity

Although the methodology of textbook analysis has been criticised of being insufficiently theorised, such as by Weinbrenner (Weinbrenner: 21), I have tried to take all preconditions in order to strengthen the methodologies for the analysis made in this thesis. In order to minimise for personal influence in the analysis I found it sensible to analyse the tasks according to the definitions of the descriptions of PISA assessment report's reading levels that are presented in table 2.1. These five levels which are further described with three under categories, *finding information*, *understanding and interpretation*, as well as *reflection and assessment*, should make the results from the analysis as reliable as possible for a textbook analysis. In table 2.2, the reading levels and the theories are listed and compared according to which reading strategy and reflection that promotes the various reading level. These tables have been strongly followed in the analysis of the tasks and therefore should the validity of the findings from the analysis be strong.

With clear explanations that are presented in table 2.1 of each reading level, the internal validity of the findings in this thesis should be close to the validity this type of study can be. Although I have only presented the results and findings from the tasks in two textbooks, the external validity of this thesis should also be strong. The reason for this is that the analysed textbooks are the most commonly used textbooks, and the only ones made for *English literature and culture VG3*. As previously mentioned this is the subject with the most advanced aims when it comes to reading literacy in the LK06 syllabus, and therefore the tasks in the analysed textbooks might function as a theoretical "litmus test" for the other textbooks and the tasks in them. It is only a small selection of task sets that are presented in this thesis, but in order to present the qualities of textbook tasks at a deeper level, the selected amount of tasks should be sufficient for this thesis.

That the reading levels are clearly operationalized in table 2.1 and 2., where each reading level is explained with reading strategies, responses and alternatives for task answers does not only strengthen the validity of this thesis, but is further strengthens the reliability of this thesis.

3.5 Presenting the data

The selected textbooks and the tasks to the selected text in this thesis are presented in the following sequence:

1) The textbooks will be presented
2) The analysis and the results from the selected textbook task will be presented
3) A summary of the analysis and results for the specific textbook

The reason for this progress is that the reader of this thesis shall get an insight into the aims of the textbook and how the authors of this present its qualities through the introduction. Then the analysis and results from the selected textbook and tasks will be presented. Due to the formal criteria for a master thesis there was a need to put a limitation on the amount of task sets that were presented in the thesis. The analysed task from the two textbooks will be presented, but the remaining tasks will be presented in the summary of each textbook in the results and analysis chapter.

3.6 Chapter summary

In the last section of this chapter I would like to summarize the method for this thesis. In order to answer the thesis question, I found it most suitable to use the qualitative method, since the purpose of this thesis is to describe to what degree textbook tasks can contribute with to the development of reading as a foundation skill. It was further natural to use the hermeneutics to interpret what the tasks might contribute to the development of the foundation skill.

In an effort to provide a dense answer to the thesis question, one sets of tasks to a text was selected from the two textbooks that are made for most advanced English subject at Norwegian compulsory school. This selection was made to get an insight into what the textbooks for the final subject might contribute to the development of the foundation skill.

In an effort to strengthen the analysis, I have created a strict instrument which is presented in figure 3.1. In addition to the categorization of the reading theories and reading levels presented in figure 2.2, this should ensure that the results in this thesis are as valid and reliable as possible for a textbook-analysis.

The analysis of the textbook tasks has been a circular process where this process as contribute to narrow down the focus into what is presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS

The following chapter is a presentation of what I have discovered through my analysis of the selected textbooks tasks. My aim with this analysis is to find what the textbook tasks can contribute with in the process of developing the aims of the reading literacy foundation aims.

The process I have gone through to analyse these tasks has been presented in *figure 3.1,* where I presented that the analysis has been a circular (hermeneutic) process between the tasks, the text, methodical approaches to literature and the categories (the efferent, the semi-aesthetic and the aesthetic). The outcome of the analysis of the category is further supported by the other categories that are presented in table 2.2. The categories in this figure are used not only to operationalize the thesis question, but to strengthen the analysis of the textbook tasks in this thesis. It is also supported by the descriptions of Pisa's assessment report definition of the five reading levels in table 2.1. The analysis of the tasks should though this process answer my supporting questions to the thesis question, which will also present a result to answer the thesis question.

The textbooks are first presented with an introduction based on my impression of the textbooks and what the textbook authors have written as characteristics of the textbook in the introduction to the respective books. The reason for this is to present what the textbook authors themselves have pointed out as focus areas and strengths in their textbooks. This is done because textbooks are only meant to be used as one of many supplement tools towards the aims of a subject and not necessarily have the position in the Norwegian school which is presented in mentioned research such as the SMUL-report (Hodgson et.al: 2012), the Master's thesis by Faye-Schøll (2009), and in research by Ragnhild Lund (2001, 2002).

It is important to point out that the tasks are presented as they are in the textbooks and the title they hold and the text is how the tasks are in the textbooks.

4.1.0 Impressions

This textbook is made in collaboration between Annabelle Despard and Elisabeth Ibsen. Elisabeth Ibsen has, as mentioned, had some influence on the theoretical approaches to authentic literature in this thesis through *Encounters with literature* (Ibsen, E. & Wiland, S. M.: 2000). This textbook is a revised version and adapted to the Knowledge Promotion, based on *Impressions* published in 1996. The major change between these books is that some of the

tasks that would promote the *creative* and *critical reading literacy* in the first version are removed in the version made for the Knowledge Promotion. The presented tasks to the text *Hills Like White Elephants* are some of these tasks that lost most of the tasks that potentially could benefit the promotion of the more advanced sides of the foundation skill.

The authors make a point that they have tried to elicit the student's personal response in the text related activities, which are referred to as textbook tasks in this thesis. It is further stated in the introduction to the textbook that the tasks have been made with the subject curriculum objectives for *English Literature and Culture*, and primarily the main area "Culture, Society and Literature" which requires that the students "should be able to interpret a representative selection of literary texts written in English from different literary periods, from the Renaissance to our own times" (Despard, A. & Ibsen, E.: 3)

The textbook authors have furthermore tried to help the student's undeveloped schemata with relevant information before some of the texts in order for the student to be able to discuss objectives.

4.1.1 Analysis of the tasks to Hills Like White Elephants
Each task will be addressed separately and the first task related to the text addresses the characters in the text.

1 Character

This short story is written from an objective point of view and the author presents his characters through dialogue, almost like a drama. That leaves us readers with the challenge of finding out how the dialogue is spoken. By reading aloud you will make a first attempt at interpreting the dialogue, thereby determining character, plot and mood. Act out the dialogue in this short story. Use a table and two chairs and follow the "stage instructions" in the narrative parts. Pay attention to where the girl directs her eyes, the way they sit and move and look at each other. All these details mark the shifts in their relationship. (Impressions: 24)

The first task for the text is a task that holds qualities of both the efferent and the aesthetic reading response. The efferent side is apparent in the parts of the task where the student is asked to skim over the text to notice where the girl directs her eyes in order to become aware of the changes in the text. This part of the task does not ask the student to include any personal response, but it helps the student to notice the changes in the text and is therefore

efferent. The part where the student is asked to read the text out loud is also more of an efferent response than it is an aesthetic.

However, where the students are asked to interpret the dialogue their way without any consideration for character, plot or mood, is a part of the task that tilts towards the aesthetic response (Ibsen & Wiland: 139). On the basis of this I conclude that the outcome of this task is more to the aesthetic response. The basis of my analysis is that the dialogue should first be acted the way the student interpret the text, and this allows for a personal response to the text. This can be structured on theory or the student's personal experience, and is very much in hand with the aesthetic theory (ibid.).

This part of the task resembles more of the top-down reading strategy and has no clear boundaries for the students (Ibsen & Wiland: 189-190), which also would make the task answer open-eyed. The reading strategy is also more towards the extensive than the intensive, as the reading process is more about the entertainment, pleasure and general understanding of the text than it is about the details (Scrivener: 188-189). The reading strategy is also closer to the creative literacy in this part of the task, because it opens for a meeting between the reader and the text, based on what the student has experienced before (Willingham: 2, Rosenblatt 1994: 11). The next part of the task asks the students to follow the stage instructions and the details of the text where the student is asked to pay notice to the girls' eye-movement. This part of the task promotes the efferent reading response. It also promotes a bottom-up approach to the text in parts of the text, but it is what the tasks promotes overall that weighs and makes it an aesthetic, as argued for.

The next task is presented to be about the plot in the text:

2 Plot

You have probably already guessed that the couple are discussing an abortion, which they refer to as "it" and "the operation". Abortion at that time in Spain was illegal, but it could be had if you paid for it. The expression "letting the air in" refers to the way this abortion was carried out.

> a) *What does the girl fear in this connection? What does the man think that the girl fears?*
> b) *Study the last paragraph carefully as the ending is ambiguous. Hemingway does not give us the ending. What do you think happens?*
> c) *Write a short summary where you sum up the short story.* **Compare your summaries.** *(Impressions: 24)*

The start of this task helps the students who have not understood what the text is about, and therefore helps to build them a scaffold for further reading. *Task a)* is an efferent task, because it is sufficiently answered through a scanning in the text for the requested paragraph in the text. It is further a task that asks the students to find information in a text where the information has little or some competing information and it is therefore challenging the students at best in reading level 2 (ref. table 2.1). The task answer is closed to this task because there is only one correct answer and it does not include a personal reflection. Moreover, is the task answer found through an intensive bottom-up reading strategy as it is more interested in the text than the reading process (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). The reason for why the task promotes the bottom-up reading strategy is that the answer is found through a search in the text and not as a result between the text and student, which is an important factor in the top-down strategy. It is a task that is presented under the term plot, but the task would be more suitable under a term that was about the characters.

Task b) is a task that is also presented under the term plot, but this is not necessarily suitable under this term as the previous task. This task asks the student to present his or her idea of what might have happened after the story "ends", and this is more about what the theme of the text is than it is about the plot. However, the task has open task answers and it is opens up for the aesthetic reading response more than the efferent because it among others allow the student to communicate and respond to the text (Ibsen & Wieland: 137). The task could also be said to have elements of the top-down reading strategy, because the task answer is based upon the meeting between the student and the text. It is important to stress that the task answer should be based on how the students interpret the text, and this is one of the important tasks of a teacher to ensure when working with tasks like this. The task could promote the skills of reading level 4 as it in many ways promote the skill to *understand how parts in a text that are not clearly expressed cohere, or how these elements cohere in a text as a whole* (ref. table 2.1). This is further a task that could allow the students to *understand, explore and ponder* around a text, as well as to develop insight into *cultures and special fields*. It is, as mentioned important that the teacher challenges the students to use other reading strategies to answer the task than what textbook tasks normally would as of them, such as skimming and scanning, If this is done, the task would also be promoting the skill of choosing *a reading strategy to the intended purpose,* which is all parts of the foundation skill in the Knowledge Promotion (LK06: 3).

Task c) is a textbook task that promotes the development of an intensive reading strategy since the task seeks to gain as much information and detail as possible (Scrivener: 188).This claim is strengthened, since it is sufficient to skim and scan the text in order to grasp the gist of the short-story and the relevant details to write a short summary asked for in the task. This is therefore a task that would develop the efferent reading strategy as it asks the student to skim and scan the text for 'desired information' and to 'get clues from its context' in order to present the main details (Kramsch: 177). The task answer is more to the closed side, than it is open-eyed as it is clear boundaries for what the text is about. The reading levels that are potentially trained through this task are at best reading level 1 and level 2.

The tasks below might be considered as tasks to start the aesthetic processes and definitively not any tasks that would challenge the knowledge of a student at the level this textbook is intended for.

3 Setting

a) *Read carefully the first paragraph. Notice the way the landscape is described and make a drawing of it.*
b) *Read carefully the other descriptions of the landscape throughout the story. Can you add new elements to your drawing?(Impressions: 24)*

Task a) is a task that promotes the efferent reading response, because it is interested in the details from the text. The task is answered through an intensive and bottom-up reading strategy (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). The drawing is more of a creative alternative to a written description of the landscape, and it might help the student to see what the landscape might resemble. However, this task is without any discussions around it an efferent task as the task asks the students to retell parts of the text, only in a creative way (Kramsch: 177). This also makes the task answer to be more closed, than open-eyed as the student is to pay attention to the descriptions and retell this as closely as possible with a drawing. This information is provided to the student through skimming in the text to get a hold of the landscape descriptions (Scrivener: 185).

Task b) is answered with the same approaches to the text as task a).

The task below is a typical example from Impression on how the theme of the text is addressed in textbook tasks:

4 Title and theme

The expression "white elephant" means (according to Longman's Dictionary of English Language and Culture) "something that is useless and unwanted, especially something that is big and/or costs a lot of money". White elephant sale is old-fashioned American English for jumble sale. The origin of this meaning of the expression stems from an early period in Siam. When the king of Siam (Thailand) spotted rebellious courtiers, he gave the rebel a sacred white (albino) elephant. This was such a precious gift that the rebel could not do nothing else in life than look after the white elephant. Thereby the king kept his power.

> a) *Explain the implications of the title "Hills Like White Elephants". Can the short story be understood without knowing the meaning of the expression "white elephant"?*
> b) *What would you say is the theme of the story?(Impressions: 24)*

The introduction to these tasks helps to fill in the student's schemata and it therefore functions as a scaffold to the tasks. *Task a)* starts off asking the student to *use personal opinions to comment on form or content in a text*, which is a skill at PISA's reading *level 1*. The second part of task a) is a task which could be answered with a yes or no, and both could potentially be correct depending on what the teacher believes, or where the teacher's knowledge about the text stretches. Due to these findings, the reading response the task is tilting more to is the semi-aesthetic. In the French version of the text, the name is not *Hills Like White Elephants*, but it is named *Paradise Lost* (Andersen, et al: 444). In one way, the knowledge of the title does help the reader to understand a text with very little relevant information on the surface. My personal opinion is that this task should be worked on and that the students could ponder around the relevance of the title in another way that could open up for a more aesthetic response than what seems possible in this task. This task is promoting a bottom-up approach to the text, because the task is more concerned about the details from the text than it opens up for a personal response. However, the task answer might be everything from closed to open-eyed, and it is therefore in the hands of the teachers as all semi-aesthetic tasks.

The answer to *task b)* has already been introduced to the students in the first set of tasks which addressed the plot. The answer to the task is already presented in the tasks, and the reading response that is used to produce an answer to the task is the efferent reading response (Kramsch: 177). Because of the task has only one correct and theoretical answer, the answer is considered to be closed. Skimming is the most effective skill to use, accompanied with the information acquired in the previous tasks to answer this task (Scrivener: 185).

4.1.2 Summary of Impressions

The tasks in this textbook are, as the introduction to it presented, made according to the curriculum aims in the subject syllabus. In order to work towards these aims, the textbook provide a good fundament, but this is only one part of the syllabus. It is important to remember that the students are to learn the facts of the texts, but also the relationship between the facts.

However, many of these tasks promote a bottom-up approach to the literature where the focus is to retrieve superficial information about the text in relation to literary terms. There is a variety of reading levels that have the potential of being developed in these tasks, but the chronology of these tasks will be discussed later on in this thesis as efferent and aesthetic tasks should build upon each other according to Ibsen (Ibsen & Wiland: 139)

Many of the approaches this thesis suggests that should be included in the textbooks are also supported by Elisabeth Ibsen, co-author of this textbook. In '*Encounters with literature: the didactics of English literature'* she addresses the aesthetic response in relation to the use of literature in the L2 teaching.

4.2.0 Access to English: Literature

This is a textbook that has been tailored for the Knowledge Promotion VG3 level subject *English Literature and Culture*. One of the characteristics of the textbook that are endorsed in the introduction to the textbook is that the authors advise the user of the textbook to "not treat the selected great works of the best writers of the English language as museum exhibits, but rather as living expressions that continue to resonate down the centuries" (Anthony, J., Burgess, R., Mikkelsen, R., & Sørhus, T, B.: 3).

At the end of the introduction, the authors state that they believe the textbook is "a treasure chest of wisdom, pleasure and fun" (Anthony, J. et al.: 4). That the authors of the textbook have decided to point out these elements as positive features with the textbook, should hint towards tasks that could span from the efferent side to the aesthetic reading response and therefore also challenge the students reading literacy according to the aims of the foundation skill.

4.2.1 Analysis of the tasks to *Gulliver's Travels*

The first set of tasks from this textbook is to an excerpt of *Gulliver's Travels*, written by Jonathan Swift.

1 Understanding the historical context

In Swift's time the bloody religious wars of the 17th century were a recent memory, and the religious conflict still played an important role in public debate. Some of the questions of doctrine about which people argued were, for example, the use of images in worship, what vestments a priest should be played at church services and, not least, transubstantiation (i.e. whether the bread and wine of the Eucharist actually was Christ's flesh and blood, or just symbolised it). Look again at the first paragraph and find satirical reference to these debates. How does he make these debates seem ridiculous?

The second paragraph refers to recent historical events that Swift's readers probably would have recognised. But they also have a more general relevance. As a modern reader, can you think of any events from modern history (e.g. the last 100 years) which fit Swift's satirical description? (Access: 103)

The first part of this task asks the student to look for satirical reference in the first paragraph of the text. It further asks how the writer has made these debates seem ridiculous. Because the task in interested in the details of the text and not the experience, the task is promoting an efferent reading response (Kramsch: 177). This is further supported because the task is answered with intensive reading strategies in order to find detail information about the text. Skimming and scanning are the preferable reading literacies to apply to this task in order to identify satire in the text. The claim of this task tilting towards the efferent reading response is further supported by the closed task answer. This information in accessed through a bottom-up approach to the text, where the purpose of the task is to create meaning (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). With supporting information and no requirement of understanding, the reading level that is trained in this task is level 1. The second part of the task asks the student to compare the historical events with modern history. To answer this task presupposes skimming of the text in order to find the historical events. It does not open up for creativity and personal reflection, but prepares the students' schema or controls that the students have read the text depending on the use later on. On the basis of this, the reading response is therefore efferent.

How the student is asked to approach the literary text in the previous task is also a characteristic in the next tasks. This part is also promoting a bottom-up approach, or intensive reading strategy to the text as the previous part, because the task is made to provide as much

meaning as possible to the student (Scrivener: 188) These tasks are "controlling" that the students have read and understood the main theme and key topic of the text:

2 Getting to grips with the text

The first extracts satirises religious factionalism and international diplomacy.

a) *How does the satire work? In other words, how does Swift manage to make things we perhaps take for granted seem perfectly ridiculous?*
b) *What do you think Swift is trying to make by inventing the Yahoos?*
c) *What aspects of human behaviour are satirised in the Houyhnhnm's description of Yahoos?*
d) *Swift chooses horses as the representatives of reason and civilisation. Why do you think he does this?*
e) *Where do the ideas of the Enlightenment shine through in these excerpts? (Access: 103)*

Task a) promotes an intensive reading strategy to the text, because it asks the students to go back into the text and look for the parts where satire is used in the text. This is not easy, and demands both knowledge of the language in addition to knowledge of the society when the text was written. Because of these challenges, the reading level might be as high as *level 3* where the student among other has to be able to *localise elements several places in a text which contains clearly competing information* (ref. table 2.1). The task is more to the *semi-aesthetic reading response* because the task answer is one way a "public experience" which is possible to read on the front page like *the efferent response*, and in another way it could open for an *aesthetic reading response* if the teacher guides the students onto this path (Rosenblatt 1978: 15). The teacher's presentation and guidance to this task would therefore also influence the reading strategy, but since the students are first asked to explain how satire work, the most normal reading strategy would be from the bottom-up with a focus on the theoretical explanation rather than a personal reflection.

In *task b)* the students are asked to see the resemblance between the Yahoos search for the pretty stones and the general materialistic society which the students live in. That Swift dislike the behaviour is quite apparent in the text as the protagonist in the text, Gulliver, prefers the company of horses over the Yahoos and the description of them is far from positive. The task could challenge the students' reading literacy at quite advanced levels, but the tasks are answered though more intensive reading strategies. The reason for this is that the students are asked to find the answer in the text, in the descriptions of the Yahoos, and not answer the task based on their own experience with the text. The task is further promoting a

bottom-up reading strategy, as the interest towards the text is to retrieve information and not to experience it. The task answer is closed, as there is one answer and therefore the reading response this task would promote is the efferent. Because the task answer is closed and based on intensive strategies, the reading level which this task might train the student in is at tops level 3. That is a reading level that is among others described as a level where the student should have the ability to find information in a text with clearly competing information (ref. table 2.2).

Task c) is also a task that is answered through an efferent reading response. The reason for this is that it is sufficient to skim the text for the part where the description takes place. This therefore also leaves the task answer closed, as the task does not ask for any elaborated personal reflections around the answer. The reading strategy is intensive, since it asks the student to find a part and the task does not ask the student to read for pleasure (Scrivener: 188). This leaves the students with a task that might develop reading level 1 or 2, as the information which is required of the students does not require pondering and reflection. The reading literacy that is asked for is the skill to find information in a part of the text that is easily accessed.

Task d) is a task that has some of the qualities that describes the aesthetic reading response, because it combines knowledge with personal response (Ibsen & Wiland: 139). This task requires the student to use quite advanced knowledge and reflect and ponder around this in relation to the text. This task therefore challenges the reader in the reading literacies that are defined as creative and critical literacies, and therefore also in reading level 4 or level 5. The reason for this is as mentioned that the students are expected to understand and interpret the text at a level where information is absolutely not clearly expressed or accessed (ref. table 2.1). The task is only fully answered if the students behold the knowledge to understand the references to Plato in the text as well as they behold the insight to see why the Houyhnhnms should not necessarily be seen as possessors of human ideals at all. Because of these challenges, this task is definitely challenging the students at the higher reading literacies.

Task e) is a task that is answered through the bottom-up reading strategy, and is therefore also promoting the intensive reading strategy (Scivener: 188). The reason for this is that the students are asked to find parts in the text that contains the ideas of the Enlightenment and the task is therefore answered with knowledge and the ability to find this in the text. The task answer is therefore closed that weights the theoretical rather than a personal response. On the

basis of what is presented about the task, it is possible to claim that the reading response to this task would be efferent. The task will therefore promote the development of reading level 2, as the information is accessed with little competing information.

The next part of the tasks for *Gulliver's Travels* is exploring satire further and the use of it in modern media.

> ### 3 Satire
>
> *Satire is a popular form in the modern media. In the US, cartoons like The Simpsons, The Family Guy and South Park are examples of satirical programmes that attract huge audiences. What is being satirised in these programmes? Which other satirical programmes do you know (television or radio)? Are there any Norwegian satirical programmes?*
>
> *If Swift were writing today, he would no doubt find more than enough to poke fun at and satirise. Choose an aspect of modern Norwegian society that you think deserves this treatment and write a satirical text along the lines of the first excerpts from Gulliver's Travels. (Look back at your answer to 2.a) You can choose your own theme, or you can pick one of these:*
>
> *The language situation ("målstrid")*
>
> *"Russefeiring"*
>
> *Norwegian foreign policy*
>
> *Norwegian participation in the Eurovision Song Contest ("Melodi Grand Prix")*
>
> *The present government*
>
> *The Royal Family (Access: 103)*

This task is somewhat on the side of the text and focuses on satire as one of the tools used in the text rather instead of the reading of the text. The task is more of an efferent approach because it is concerned with the theoretical qualities of satire as a literary tool rather than how the students have experienced the satire in the text (Kramsch: 177). The task further promotes a bottom-up reading strategy to the text, as it focuses on the theoretical experience of the use of satire in the text, rather than a personal experience (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). The task could open up for a personal expression, but it is not necessarily in relation to the text, but instead to the chosen topic. Because of this, the discussion around the literary term has a display purpose in this task which supports the claim of this task tilting towards the efferent side (Widdowson: 171). This task does not promote a search for information in the text, or a personal response to the text and it is therefore not possible to comment more on potential reading literacies or reading levels that might have been promoted by this task.

4.2.2 Summary of *Access to English: Literature*

The tasks in this textbook promote an approach to literature that favours the development of the efferent reading response over the aesthetic response. The tasks to selected text in this textbook are firstly developing knowledge that is retrieved from the text through efferent reading responses. Such tasks, with closed answers, are more superficial tasks that challenge the students' reading literacy at lower levels. The tasks are mostly answered with information about the text or literary terms that are found in the surface of the text through intensive reading strategies. That there are a great part of the tasks that promote skimming and scanning for information, supports the claim of the tasks being firstly trainers of the reading ability which is important to find easily accessed information.

There are tasks that challenge the students reading literacy and the aesthetic reading response, but this is a reading response that is far less promoted through the tasks than the efferent. However, there are some tasks that move over into the semi-aesthetic dimension.

There is very little pondering and reflection in relation to personal responses that are allowed in these tasks, and as a result of this, the reading levels that are trained through these tasks are firstly level 1 and level 2. There are a few tasks that allow the students to move into level 3, and one task that challenge the students at level 4 and level 5. This shows that there is a variation, but how well this is will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.3.0 Summary

What this analysis show is that there is a clear majority of tasks in the textbooks that promote a minority of the reading literacies. What the tasks promote is first and foremost the efferent reading response, because a majority of the tasks ask about information that is easily retrieved in the text without any specific competing information. In some tasks, the answer is even presented to the students in information that is meant to scaffold and support the students who might be missing the necessary pre-knowledge to answer the task. There are also a noticeable amount of tasks that promote the semi-aesthetic reading response. However, the amount of tasks that challenged the students' aesthetic reading response was low, and the analysis show that there is not much room for reflections and pondering.

The results of the analysis show that there was a similar amount of tasks with a closed task answer as there were tasks with efferent reading response. There were a few tasks that had a divergent task answer, and even less tasks that allowed for a open-eyed task answer.

The analysis present that the bottom-up reading strategy is the most common. There are not many tasks that promote the top-down strategy, and therefore is the extensive reading strategy also more or less untouched. There are many tasks that train the students' ability to use the intensive reading strategy to find information in the text.

The most common reading literacy that is applied through these tasks is skimming and scanning. This fits well with the previous strategies, where the majority of the reading literacies that are trained are the ones that are used to find information and detail in a text. There is one task for each text that allows the students to explore the creative and critical literacy.

It is mostly two of the PISA assessment reading levels that are trained through the work with the textbook tasks, and this is level 1 and level 2. The reason for this assertion is that a majority of the tasks are answered with information that is found in the text with little or no competing information. There are also a few tasks that move into reading level 3. Reading level 4 and level 5 are not as present in the textbook tasks as the other reading levels. There are a few tasks that challenge the students at these reading levels, but these levels are less present in the tasks than the other levels.

What this uneven inclusion of the reading literacies and reading levels in the textbook tasks will have to say for the development of the foundation skill of reading will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

This chapter will be presented according to the operationalizing categories that are presented in chapter 2 and in table 2.2. The first part of this chapter will address whether the reading literacies have a potential of being developed properly as a bi-product from with the analysed textbook tasks. How well the reading literacies are developed will be discussed chronologically according to table 2.2. First, there will be a discussion around the development of the reading responses and possible the task answers, before the reading strategies and the reading literacy will be discussed. The outcome of this discussion will answer the first of my supporting questions which is: *What is trained through the tasks according to relevant reading literacy theory?*

The second part of this chapter will present and discuss the development of the assessment reading levels as a result of work with the analysed tasks. In this part of the thesis I will also discuss how well the tasks promote the skills that are aimed after in the foundation aim of reading for *English Literature and Culture* (LK06: 3) as well as PISA's definition on reading literacy (PISA 2006: 1). The result of these two paragraphs will provide an answer to my second thesis question which is: *What parts of the foundation skill of reading are developed through the tasks?*

At the end of this chapter I will discuss what the tasks can contribute with to the development of the foundation skill of reading. I will also discuss where the tasks appears to have their strength in relation to the development of reading literacies, and from the results of this discussion I will end this thesis in the closing chapter.

5.1.0 The task quality according to reading literacy theory

The following paragraphs will address the textbook tasks according to how well they promote a development of the foundation skill through a variation in *reading response, reading strategy, reading literacy* and *task answer*. If the students are to develop a reading literacy, then it is important that they are challenged widely and not only in parts of the foundation skill. According to Kramsch (1993), the reading strategies are best trained when the students are exposed to the strategies simultaneously (Kramsch: 10). However, it might therefore be realistic to assume that the work on contrasting reading literacies might provide the students with a better understanding for where the various reading literacies might be a more suitable approach to answer or read a text than others. Whether the tasks for the selected texts and

textbooks might provide the students with a varied balance towards the reading literacy skills follows in the next paragraphs.

5.1.1 Reading responses
The Efferent reading response

The most recurring reading response in textbook tasks is the efferent reading response. Why textbook tasks seem to promote the efferent reading response is hard to be specific about without interviewing the authors of the textbook, but it might not be surprising to discover that the most used reading response in the textbook tasks is the efferent. The authors of the textbooks present that the focus of the textbooks is on the curriculum aims of the subject. In *Access to English: Literature*, it is presented that only a portion of the curriculum aims are in focus. This might give some clues to the user of the textbook that other parts of the subject syllabus might be less developed if that specific textbook is used as the only tool for the class, a situation which is not unrealistic (Hodgson, et al: 15)

When the tasks are more or less only promoting an efferent response to the texts due to how the textbook tasks are formed, it does not give the students much room to develop a skill and awareness of reading strategies. A straight forward focus on the curriculum aims, as the authors present to have in the textbooks, appears to promote an approach to literature that comes in conflict with the basic skills for the subject according to the findings in the analysis in this thesis.

The efferent tasks can either be present in the tasks to provide a scaffold for the students for further work with the text, or they might be seen as controllers to make sure that the students have read the text (Ibsen & Wiland: 139-140). Since a very small number of the tasks in the analysed textbooks invites for an aesthetic experience, the necessity of a scaffold is not necessarily present and the tasks may therefore be seen as primarily controlling the students and at worst it might also put a limitation on the potential learning outcome (Kramsch: 123). That a majority of the tasks are efferent means that the majority of tasks in the analysed textbooks are promoting a reading of authentic literature that is quite similar to how a person would read a cooking recipe (ibid.).

The first part of the reading literacy foundation skill states that the aim of reading is more than the ability to withdraw information from a text (LK06: 3). Students attending this subject are

expected to learn how to understand, explore and ponder the information they are faced with when reading a text. This is the same for scientific texts as for the texts with authentic literature from the target language as this thesis addresses (L1 literature). The parts of the foundation skill of reading which addresses the understanding and exploring of texts are inadequately promoted through the textbook tasks. There are several examples presented in the analysis to substantiate this claim, such as the many tasks that were concerned with the development around literary terms that barely touched the surface of the texts. The task that stood out the most was Task 4 to *Hills Like White Elephants* where the tasks were scaffolded with some information about what the term white elephant meant. Here the answer was given to the student in the task, and it is not necessary to go into the text in an effort to find the answer. For a text like this, it is sad to see that there is such a narrow challenge in reading literacies.

The semi-aesthetic reading response

Another reading response that is fairly trained as a result of the task work on the analysed tasks is the semi-aesthetic. This category has been constructed for this thesis based on Guy Cook's three terms to describe the difference between the efferent and the aesthetic (Cook: 161). These three terms are used in this thesis to support the choice of reading response, and are the closed task answer, divergent task answer and open-eyed task answer. The semi-aesthetic was constructed upon the divergent task answer, to categorise the many tasks that had a potential of tilting towards both the efferent and the aesthetic response. The reason for this is that many of the tasks start up with a task question that is aesthetic, but the task is narrowed in by question(s) that could shift the focus onto a more efferent approach to the text.

Task 2 a) to *Gulliver's Travels* is a typical task that has a divergent task answer and is therefore considered to be a semi-aesthetic task in this thesis. The reason for this is that the task can both promote a theoretical approach to the text, which is to the efferent side. However, the task also opens up for a personal response and reflection around the satire in the text which would hold more of the qualities that are in the aesthetic response. This task is therefore more to the semi-aesthetic reading response because the task answer is one way a "public experience" which is possible to read on the front page like the efferent response, and in another way it could open for an aesthetic reading response if the teacher guides the students onto this path. Which way a task like this would go, either efferent or aesthetic, is in

the hands of the teachers, and since there is not a culture to discuss the task answers it might be more likely that the task would be treated more in the efferent dimension according to findings in the SMUL-report (Hodgson, et al: 15)

This reading response demands teachers that are willing to use the necessary time to discuss around the possible task answers. Moreover, this might open up for the dialoge between the text and the reader where the text is allowed to become the partner in dialogue as presented by Lotman (Lotman 1990: 80). If this dialogue is allowed, the tasks that are in this dimension will open up for more of the aesthetic reading response which is discussed in the following paragraph.

The aesthetic reading response

That the textbooks would contain more efferent tasks than aesthetic was not a specific surprise to me before I started on this task, as I had been through a pre-test before this thesis which is explained in the methodical chapter. However, that the aesthetic reading response would be as poorly utilised as is evident in the tasks was far below any personal expectation. If the results of the analysis in this thesis truly represents the reality for what students experience and potentially gain from working with textbook tasks, then the unsatisfying level of reading literacies in the Norwegian school might be partially explained (Roe, Astrid: 2010).

The challenge in a subject such as *English Literature and Culture* is to combine an approach to literature which resembles the approach one normally would have as a private person and not a student (Kramsch: 178). At the same time the subject should, naturally, approach the literature at a professional level which might give the student the professional vocabulary and knowledge one would expect them to attain in a subject like English Literature and Culture. If the approaches to the literary texts promote a substantial overweight of efferent responses, then only the attainment of a professional vocabulary and knowledge of literary analysis will be addressed properly, the emotional response that might develop a wider span of the reading literacy will on the other hand be missing.

It is pointed out that without the inclusion of the aesthetic dimension when approaching literature, the use of literature would only be a display of a language that at worst could be over the students' ability to understand (Widdowson: 171). It is therefore important that the students are challenged with efferent tasks to build a scaffold to support their unfinished schemata, but this should only the preparatory part of the tasks. After the efferent tasks it is important that the students are given the opportunity to experience the text.

The efferent tasks can be seen as a checklist before a trip, but the aesthetic tasks are the journey where the students can extend their horizon, develop their understanding for not only another culture but also their own (Kramsch: 178). This is one of the issues with task 1 to *Hills Like White Elephants*, which is a good task if it were not for the fact that it breaks with Ibsen's recommendations for how textbook tasks should be structured (Although she is also the author of the respective textbook which the task is from). Ibsen has stressed that the developing tasks are in the aesthetic dimension and that they should follow after the efferent tasks (Ibsen & Wiland: 147).

That there are few tasks that offer the aesthetic reading response is naturally signalising that there is not enough focus on the span of reading strategies. This poses the question about the quality of the tasks in relation to the development of reading literacy. When the literary terms are treated just as superficially as the literary text, the tasks tilt towards a display purpose rather than being tools towards the development of reading literacy. This is a situation Kramsch (1993) has warned about, and might undermine the purpose of including literature in the classroom (Kramsch: 178).

Elisabeth Ibsen points out how aesthetics "are concerned with the beauty and value of art and the way art impresses us and gives a sense of insight" (Ibsen: 137). She further points out that aesthetics cover not only the receptive, but also the productive process and this is also a strong argument for including the aesthetic dimension. This is also supported with research that shows that the extensive reading strategy has positive effects on the development of other language skills than the reading skill (Cook: 153). It should therefore be no reason to exclude the reading response from the textbook tasks, and my concern for the development of the reading literacy is strong.

I am also afraid that the aesthetic qualities in the textbook tasks might be unintentionally untapped by the students if they have not been offered a variety in reading strategies. The reason for this fear is that the students might approach the aesthetic tasks with reading strategies that promote the efferent just because this is what they have been trained to do. The bottom-up approach to texts is the most common approach in the textbooks, and when this is what they are drilled in, it might also be their natural approach to reading of texts. It is pointed out that the reading strategies are best trained when the student is exposed to them at the same time, and it is therefore not unrealistic the wonder if the reading responses might benefit from the same (Kramsch: 10).

5.1.2 Reading strategies
Intensive reading

A majority of the tasks are answered with intensive reading strategies where the purpose of the reading activity is to find information in the text. Whether these tasks are in the textbooks to prepare the students for more developing reading tasks or if the reading activity is to check and control the students' work in the classroom is in the hands of the teachers who chooses to utilize the tasks. The intensive reading strategy is an important reading literacy, and it shares characteristics with the bottom-up reading approach as it seeks to gain as much information and detail as possible (Scrivener: 188).

The majority of tasks to *Gulliver's Travel* are tasks that will develop this reading literacy, as the tasks ask for details in sections or excerpts of a text rather than the whole text and its messages. The textbook tasks promote reading activities that can give the students sufficiently amounts of information to hopefully recall the for an examination, but the tasks do seldom move over into the more pondering and exploring parts of the reading literacy.

The intensive reading strategy is compared with the bottom-up reading approach as it seeks to gain as much information and detail as possible (Scrivener: 188). This reading strategy should therefore be well trained as the bottom-up reading strategy is considered to be the most used in Norwegian school (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). It is an important skill to train, because the more developing tasks are depending on the knowledge this reading strategy can provide the student with. It is not considered to be a natural way to read texts such as novels, articles or poems. However, students are often asked to process literature through tasks that ask whether

something is true/false and other comprehension questions afterwards in order to check if they have understood the content of the specific text (Scrivener: 188). The tasks that have been analysed for this thesis is no exception, and as we can see from the analysis the main focus of the task is to control whether the students have understood the literary terms on a superficial basis.

Extensive reading

The extensive reading strategy is almost non-existing in the analysed tasks compared to the intensive. That *Gulliver's Travel* is an adapted excerpt of the text and not the full text, might give some indications to claim that the reading focus is in textbooks is not in the extensive strategies. Cook (2000) has previously pointed out that it is not necessarily the best way to prioritise the stimulation of a final goal in order to achieve this aim (Cook: 153). In relation to these tasks, and the amounts of tasks that develop a scaffold without utilising it, there will be a risk according to Cook (2000) that this will affect the students learning outcome and motivation (Cook: 161). However, one of the few tasks that allowed for a personal response and also an extensive reading strategy was the first task to *Hills Like White Elephants.* In this task the students are allowed to experience and respond to literature in a way that is quite uncommon, but probably quite useful in school.

That the tasks touch upon the literary terms in a superficial manner, this might hint towards that the textbook tasks are made to provide as much of this type of information and less of the deeper understanding. However, this will definitely also have its influence on which parts of the reading literacy is trained. The presentation of the extensive reading strategy in the theoretical chapter presents that the extensive reading strategy has many benefits for the language development, but it is unfortunately not included in language teaching as much as it probably should as students are seldom given the opportunity to read long texts of their own desire (ibid.).

The only task that allowed for something that can resemble this reading strategy was the first task to *Hills Like White Elephants.* Here the students are let loose on the text in one part of the task, but it can be argued that it is not fully exploiting the possibility as the task shifted towards a focus on details in the text rather than the pleasure, entertainment and general understanding (Scrivener: 188-189).

Bottom up

There is a majority of textbook tasks that promote a *bottom-up* reading strategy, and this reading strategy has been presented as the most commonly applied reading strategy in a foreign language class in Norway (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). What we can see from the analysis of the textbook tasks is that the task work seems to be to develop as much theoretical knowledge around the text and literary terms. However, this leaves the development of the reading literacy with a repetitive training on the efferent dimension where finding theory in the text is the skill that is trained. An example of this approach to the text is task 4 to *Hills Like White Elephants* where the information to answer the task is more or less given to the students in the introduction to the tasks.

That the bottom-up approach is the most typical reading strategy that is trained in the tasks is possible to cross-check with how often the tasks promote the intensive and extensive reading strategy. What is noticeable here is that the intensive reading strategy is a reading literacy that is more often trained through the textbook tasks than the extensive.

Top down

The most important difference between the top-down and the bottom-up reading is that the focus is on the reading process instead of the text (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). The result of the analysis in this thesis is that there are not many textbook tasks that ask the students to ponder and reflect on their experience with the text. The potential for including such a reading strategy to the texts is in the texts, but the presented focus on curriculum aims is apparent in the tasks.

The paradox with the tasks to *Hills Like White Elephants* is how they promote a *bottom-up* reading strategy to a text where only a small percentage of the text's message and content is written explicitly on the pages. To literature such as the example-text by Ernes Hemingway, it should in my opinion be smart to train the parts of the foundation skill of reading that is needed to understand a text that is written with the 'ice-berg technique'. Instead of the textbook tasks are treating the literature like a text where the information is easily accessible. To provide the students with scaffolds can be necessary as they might be lacking the necessary schemata to respond and ponder around the topics of the analysed texts (Ibsen &

Wiland: 147). It is also important for the top-down strategy that the construction of meaning happens as an interaction between the text and the reader (Ibsen & Wiland: 189).

As the results from the analysis show, the claim about the *top-down* and *bottom-up* processes often being taught and presented to the students separately is confirmed, with only the first task to *Hills Like White Elephants* as the exception (Kramsch: 11). If the students are to develop these reading strategies, both should be asked for in the task so that the students learn to see the interaction between them (ibid.). As the analysis show, the top-down strategy is absent, and it is therefore not possible to develop the skill at a level that can be seen as sufficient.

As presented, a variation between is needed between the reading strategies for students to acquire a consciousness around the two approaches. Without this consciousness the students will probably not learn to select the most suitable approach to each task and therefore not be able to utilise the reading strategies of the bottom-up and top-down approaches.

5.1.3 Task answers

The difference between aesthetic, semi-aesthetic and efferent reading response can be described by the terms *open-ended* tasks, *closed* tasks and *divergent* tasks (Cook: 161). The efferent reading response would most commonly be placed as a closed task, as these forms of tasks do not have any alternative answer, only one correct. This category has been used to strengthen the operationalization of the reading responses as measurable qualities of textbook tasks in this thesis.

What the analysis present when it comes to task answers is that the textbook tasks are mostly closed. That the task answers are mostly closed is naturally and is probably the direct result of the fact that the bottom-up reading strategy is the most common reading strategy in the Norwegian textbooks (Ibsen & Wiland: 189). However, the bottom-up strategy is a reading strategy that is used to find information and details in a text. It is natural to assume that there is a correlation between the high amounts of tasks with bottom-up strategy and closed task answers.

There are some tasks that hold the quality of the divergent task answer, which in this thesis has been compared to the semi-aesthetic reading response. The problem with the divergent

and open-eyed tasks is that the most common approach to textbook tasks is, according to the SMUL-report (Hodgson, et al: 15), that the task answers are not discussed in Norwegian classrooms.

In tasks where the task answer can be divergent or open-eyed, it is important to open up for a discussion around the answers and to allow a personal response. If the personal response is not included, the inclusion of literary texts is turned into a display of literature instead of allowing the students to respond to the texts in the most natural approach. The preferable approach would be to include tasks with open-eyed task answers (Kramsch: 178). As the analysis of the tasks in this thesis show; there are not many tasks that allow the students to respond to a literary text through a task that has open-eyed task answers.

5.1.4 Reading literacy
Scanning and Skimming

Skimming and scanning in the texts is not the most natural approach to literature, but it is helpful for the students in the process of creating a supportive scaffold when working with literary texts in school (Ibsen & Wiland: 139). The necessity for this scaffold is present because a majority of the students have not developed their reading schemata at the level which is necessary to answer the more developing tasks that could contribute to the development of more challenging reading literacies, such as the aesthetic reading response and the development of the assessment reading level 4 and level 5 (ref. table 2.1).

Skimming and scanning for words does have its purpose, as a preparation for the developing tasks, but if the developing tasks fail to appear then the efferent tasks only end up as control-questions to oversee if the students have read the specific text. With such an approach to literature, the students will not necessarily develop their vocabulary, grammatical skills or their personal qualities. What they at best hold at the end of a course where the textbook has been the fundament is the ability to read a text fast in order to find its main ideas, key topic, basic structure or find specific information in that text such as names, addresses and numbers (Scrivener: 185).

What the tasks promote of reading strategies is how to read fast, through skimming and scanning for information (Scrivener: 185). The tasks also promote a bottom-up approach to the literature where the attention to the literary terms in relation to the text is so much in focus

that the joy and experience from reading literature is practically disregarded. Luckily it is considered by most teachers as insufficient to teach only through the textbooks, but since results show that many do so (ref. Hodgson, et al. 2012, Faye-Schjøll 2009 and Lund 2001), the need to address the quality of textbook tasks is long overdue.

In order to learn how to choose the most suitable reading strategy to the intended reading purpose (LK06: 3), the students have to work with this over the whole subject length. It is not sufficient to teach reading skills once in a while, because a skill is more than knowledge, it is something that has to be acquired and utilised by the student at a general basis (Kramsch: 11). This all brings us back to the results found by Faye-Schjøll in her thesis, which presented a situation in the L2 classes where reading was neglected as a skill due to the lack of time. As we may see from the tasks, reading is also neglected here as a skill.

Creative literacy and Critical literacy

These are reading literacies that are very little touched upon through the work with textbook tasks. However, they are quite relevant reading literacies that are aimed at in the Knowledge Promotion. In the theoretical chapter, these literacies are presented having the ability to read a text and having the ability to ask how, why and in whose interest particular texts might work (Luke & Freebody: 218). Approaching a text like this would involve the students to take part in the creation of meaning in the text, and it would therefore hold many of the characteristics that are in the aesthetic reading response (ibid.).

The reading skills a student behold when they are capable to employ these strategies when reading a text, is the forms of reading literacy that are aimed after in the *General curriculum aims* in the Knowledge promotion (Udir: 2). One of the overall aims of the general part of the Knowledge Promotion is that the students are to develop skills that make them able to participate, experience and explore our society (ibid.). In order to live up to these aims, the students have to learn a certain amount of necessary knowledge and skills, such as the literacy foundation skill.

In the introduction to the reading theories I cited Farstrup (2005) on his claim about what the students today are expected to display of literacy reading skills (Farstrup, A. 2005). To be in possession of such advanced skill is important for all participants in a democratic society, and it is therefore disappointing to see how neglected the reading literacy as a foundation skill is

in the analysed textbook tasks. Moreover, it is concerning to see the correlation between how teachers support themselves on textbook and tasks that do not sufficiently promote a variation of reading literacies and the results where Norwegian students disappoint compared to our neighbours, although there has been an improvement here (Roe, A. 2010).

However, the creative and critical literacy is only trained if the students are challenged to approach a text at this manner regularly, and it is clear that reading literacy skills are only developed through regular amounts of reading (Willingham: 2). It is also known that what the students have acquired from previous activities, and the more organised this knowledge is, the more it will strengthen the students' learning potential (Fretheim: 11). These findings should strengthen the necessity for a more even exposure to tasks that promote a variety of contrasting reading strategies and responses.

5.2.0 The development of a foundation skill

This paragraph will display a discussion on how the qualities of the textbook tasks are according to the aims of PISA's reading literacy framework and the foundation aim of the Knowledge promotion subject *English Literature and Culture*. The textbook tasks have been presented previously as tilting towards the more efferent reading response and the intensive side of the reading literacies.

First in this chapter I will present which of the reading assessment levels that are properly developed in the analysed tasks and which of the levels that might need focus in addition to the textbook tasks.

The second paragraph in this chapter will discuss how well the foundation skill of reading might be developed through the analysed textbook tasks. Together these two paragraphs will provide the answer to the second supporting question which is concerned about what parts of the foundation skill of reading that are developed through the analysed tasks.

5.2.1 The PISA levels

In this paragraph I will address to what degree the five levels of reading literacy (ref. *table 2.1*) are developed through the work with textbook tasks. I will also discuss how well these levels are represented in the analysed tasks and what this will have to say for the students.

According to the presented research of textbooks and task work, such as the SMUL survey (Hodgson, et al. 2012), Ragnhild Lund (2001, 2002) and Linn Hovd Faye-Schøll (2009), the quality of the textbook tasks will most likely have an influence on the development of the students reading literacy levels.

The analysis of the textbook tasks in thesis shows that there is a majority of the tasks that will benefit the development of reading *level 1* and *level 2*. The reason for why these levels are developed and trained more than the other reading levels is because a majority of the textbook tasks is asking the students to find information in the text which is quite easily accessed. The information which the majority of the textbook tasks ask the students to find is information that hopefully will provide the students with a basic knowledge around the literary texts. It has been mentioned that it is important that the students develop a schemata or scaffold to discuss around a text, but if the textbook tasks do not open up for this discussion, the tasks can easily seem like controllers to make sure that the students have read the texts.

The other category of reading literacies that has the potential to be developed is *level 3*. This is a reading level which is categorised in this thesis as the semi-efferent reading response, and the reason for this is that the reading assessment level includes both a personal response and an ability to search for information. The reading level is a fairly advanced reading level, which includes the ability of finding information in a text with clearly competing information, defining a topic which is not clearly expressed or understanding the cohesion between various parts of the text, as well as the ability to assess form or content in a text by comparing, contrasting or categorising information. As we can see from these tasks, the reading level is not necessarily fully developed through the tasks as only parts of the reading level is demanded of the students. If the level is fully developed through all of the tasks in the textbook is hard to say specifically, but the impression after the analysis of the chosen task sets is that textbook tasks will mostly be beneficial for the development of the first two reading levels.

The PISA reading *level 4* and *level 5* are more seldom trained through the textbook tasks compared to the other reading levels. Whether these levels are avoided in the textbook tasks because the task answers are personal as well as quite complex, is something that will remain a question in this thesis and not something I will pursue further. What could be just as concerning as the absence of these reading levels is the appalling research results in surveys such as the SMUL-report (Hodgson, et al.: 15). In this report, an attitude towards tasks where

the teachers do not discuss or debate task answers with their students is the most common approach.

What the results from the analysis show is that the narrow focus on the efferent reading response might be even worse if teachers do not exploit the possibilities that are in the semi-aesthetic tasks. It is presented in this thesis that tasks that have divergent task answers, or are in the semi-aesthetic dimension should be discussed in class and pondered around rather than closed and accepted with the first task answer (Cook: 161). This way, the teachers might challenge the students in to the aesthetic reading response, and therefore also develop the reading skills in the higher reading levels such as level 4 and level 5.

If the results from international surveys that map our students reading literacy is considered in relation to the qualities of the tasks and the known dependence on textbooks, the disappointing results might be a reflection of the levels students are generally working at in the Norwegian school. There has been an improvement in the results that the Norwegian students have been measured to be at in the PISA and PIRLS from being the works nation of the OECD countries in the PIRLS survey in 2006 (Daal, Victor, 2007). My question is whether the students' development is held back as a result of where the focus is on literature in textbooks, where the tasks promote an intensive reading strategy instead of an extensive.

The textbook tasks that were analysed in this thesis were both from a subject which has literature and culture in focus, and it would therefore be natural to think that the students' reading literacy would be trained regularly and widely. What the analysis in this thesis reveals is that the textbook tasks most often contain questions that are answered through a small portion of the quite complex reading literacy foundation aims and it is a clear tendency in the approach of the tasks that the activity is not to train the reading skill, but to provide the students with the necessary information with the subject exam at mind.

5.2.2 Reading literacy as a foundation skill

Pisa definition

The definition of reading literacy in the PISA reading literacy framework (2006) presents that the reading literacy spans from having an understanding of the text and being able to use this information, to the ability of reflecting and engaging with the content of a text. These skills are mentioned as important abilities towards personal goals, knowledge development and thus

potential development, as well as participation in society (PISA 2006: 1). As we can see, the definition of the reading literacy involves everything from finding information in a text to being personally involved and reflects on the content of a text. It is therefore important that these skills are trained regularly at school.

However, it is presented from the analysis of the textbook tasks in this thesis that only a small part of the reading literacy definition is developed through the task work. The definition of being literate includes reflection and engagement in order to involvement in society and to develop one's potential (PISA 2006: 1). There are not many tasks that allow the students to reflect or engage, as the majority of tasks are concerned with another part of the definition which is the development of knowledge, specifically the superficial knowledge of the text and literary terms. That a majority of the tasks are made for the acquiring of knowledge and the efferent reading response, is good for the development of a schemata and this therefore prepares the students for further reading (Lund 2002: 25).

The findings in this thesis is supported by Lund's presentation of textbook task qualities, where the tasks seem to build a scaffold that can help the students to discuss literary texts at a higher level. However, this possibility is untapped as the tasks are in the textbooks today. Since it is also presented by both Lund and in the SMUL-report that the majority of teaching is based on the textbooks, it is possible to assume that the scaffold which the textbooks tasks might provide the students with is left untapped (Lund, 2001) (Hodgson, et al: 15).

If the students are allowed to experience literature the way it is intended to experience literature, the end result might improve the average level of reading literacy (Scrivener: 188-189). The complexity of the reading literacy should be presented to the reader of this thesis in quite a thorough manner at this point, and it has also been mentioned that the development of reading literacies is best done when the contrasting skills are trained simultaneously so that the students might see the interaction between the literacies (Kramsch: 10). What the analysis of the task show is that the various reading literacies are mostly developed separately, and it is not necessarily a sensible structure for when students are challenged in the various literacies.

Foundation skill in the Knowledge Promotion

As presented in the discussion about how the textbook tasks train both the extensive and the intensive reading strategy, it is noticeable that the tasks primarily ask the student about

superficial information about either the text or about literary terms in relation to the text. The textbook tasks seldom include pondering and exploring around the content in the texts. Moreover, with this narrow challenge of the reading literacy, it is plausible to state that the work with textbook tasks will provide the students with an insufficient variation and challenge in reading skills. The textbook tasks are inadequate tools on their own, and it is important that the students are allowed to develop the various reading literacies more regularly than what the students seems to be in the analysed tasks.

As a possible result of the focus on the curriculum aims (Despard, A. & Ibsen, E.: 3), the textbook tasks promote very little extensive reading, if anything at all. The extensive reading strategy was presented as not only the reading strategy that resembles a normal approach to literature outside of the school, but it was also presented as quite beneficial for the development of language skills (Scrivener: 188-189). That this reading strategy is more or less absent in the tasks results in an approach to literature that is unnatural and possibly demotivating for the students (Kramsch: 123).

Teaching the subject curriculum according to a textbook and its tasks will not benefit the students' development, but there are no contradictions between tasks that promote *both* the development of the foundation skill as well as the curriculum aims. This will probably demand more of both the teachers and the textbook authors, but the current situation where teachers solemnly depend on textbooks and their tasks is far from satisfying.

The missing development of some of the reading literacies in the textbook tasks is concerning. Whether or not the absence is because the reading literacy is a more challenging skill to measure is something I can only ponder about on my own for now.

However, the analysis in this thesis present results that make it plausible to claim that the reading literacy seems to be a skill that is mostly trained indirectly in the textbook tasks. It appears to be focus on a development of a more superficial knowledge around the texts and literary terms such as plot, setting, theme and imagery. The knowledge which the tasks provide the students with is important for further advanced reading, what the analysis in this thesis fails to provide me with is information on when the students are allowed to fully experience literature as in the description of the foundation skill (LK06: 3).

5.3.0 Chapter summary

The analysed textbooks in this thesis present themselves as focusing on one area of the curriculum, but what I fear after the analysis in this thesis is that this focus might be a bit narrow for the development of the foundation skill of reading. Reading strategies are best learned if they are given attention at the same time, and this might also be the situation for the reading responses. If the students are to develop the reading literacy according to the aim in *English Literature and Culture*, they have to develop the necessary scaffold in addition to explore and ponder around the content in a text.

One of the areas that is important to be concerned about after the analysis of the textbook tasks is whether the reading literacies are sufficiently trained as a result of task work. A clear majority of the tasks promote the efferent reading response and are easily answered through skimming and scanning of the text for information. This is reading literacies that is needed to bake a cake, to be informed about the daily news and to answer comprehension questions on a reading test (Kramsch: 123). This is also tasks that are typical for textbooks where there is one correct answer.

Further, the tasks seem to be made with the development of superficial knowledge about the text and literary terms, than the development of skills such as reading literacy. That *Gulliver's Travel* is a simplified excerpt is a typical school approach to literature and a result of the bottom-up approach. This moreover strengthens my impression of tasks being tools to control whether the students have read the text and learned the basics about the text. Knowledge which is relevant to talk or write about when examined as well as it prepares for further reading since these tasks provide the development of a schemata for the students. This is an important and relevant part of the reading literacy, but it is at the same time a narrow part of the literacy. If the overall aims, of both the subject and school, are taken into consideration, then language teachers as well as other teachers should include more of the reading literacies that resemble the top-down strategy, the aesthetic response and extensive reading strategy if they aim to provide their students with challenges that might develop the foundation skill of reading.

The expectations of what the students are to display of reading literacy has increased to become a quite advanced skill, and the aims of the Knowledge Promotion continue to expect more of the student (Farstrup, 2005). The definitions of the reading literacies in both the PISA assessment framework (PISA 2006) and the Knowledge promotion (LK06) aims after skills

that are necessary in a society with increasing amounts of information as well as higher studies at a university or university college.

However, it is hard to see how the students are going to develop these reading literacies as the analysis of the textbook tasks present them as insufficient if they are the only tool used to develop the reading literacy which is aimed after in the Knowledge Promotion.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

The aim and purpose of this thesis has been to investigate what textbook tasks might contribute to the process of developing reading literacy as a foundation skill. As presented in the analysis and discussion in this thesis, the textbook tasks are presented as recourses that are mostly relevant towards the development of the efferent reading response and the reading level 1 and level 2.

In this final chapter, I will revisit the thesis question of this thesis. In this paragraph I will present my answer to the thesis question. This answer will be based on what the analysis provided of answers to the supporting questions.

Further in this chapter, I will present some ideas to how teachers might utilize textbook tasks towards the aims of the foundation skill of reading. These are some ideas based on the theory in this thesis, and observations in the analysis. I will also present my ideas for further research within this field, based on where I developed a further interest for this topic in the research process.

The last paragraph in this chapter is the ending conclusion which sums up the findings in this thesis. It is important to remember that this thesis is only a theoretical approach to the subject in matter and that there are great variations in each classroom to how well textbook tasks are utilized as tools towards the development of foundation skills such as reading literacy.

6.1 Revisiting the thesis question

This thesis has addressed the qualities of textbooks according to how balanced the tasks promote the aesthetic and efferent reading responses. The purpose of this was to see if the textbook tasks utilised the potential that is in the texts which the tasks are made for with the following thesis question as the point of departure:

> *To what extent do textbook tasks contribute to the development of students' reading literacy in English in Norwegian secondary schools?*

The follow up questions to the thesis question addressed the quality of the tasks from a theoretic side and according to the development of the foundation skill:

1. What is trained through the tasks according to relevant reading literacy theory?

2. What parts of the foundation skill of reading are developed through the tasks?

Through these follow up questions I made *table 2.1* and *table 2.2*, in order to operationalize the thesis question in this thesis. This has in my opinion made the analysis and discussion around the quality of the textbook tasks quite clear.

What the analysis in this thesis presented is that the textbook tasks demands a limited amount of the reading literacy theories. The focus of the textbook task is on the parts that promotes a theoretically and superficial approach to the development of the reading literacy. Examples on this are that a majority of the textbook tasks promote an *efferent reading response*, a *closed task answer, skimming* and *scanning* for information. It is also typical that the textbook tasks ask for an *intensive reading* where a *bottom-up approach* to the literature is the most recurring reading strategy.

The answer to the second follow up question is that it is first and foremost a focus on *reading level 1* and *2*. It is typical that a task might ask the students to *localise clearly expressed elements in a text with little competing information* as in *level 1: Finding information.* This approach to literature gives the students a necessary scaffold for more developing tasks, but when the developing tasks fail to occur. When the aesthetic dimension fails to materialize, then the function of the textbook task is more to control the student's work and not to promote any development of reading literacy.

The textbook tasks should open for more of the *creative* and *critical literacy* as well as the *aesthetic reading response*. This is not only the most natural approach to literature, but is it is important parts of the foundation skill, and the students should therefore be challenged at this level at a regular basis. This could also be more in line with Rosenblatt's definition of reading, as the students are allowed to base their experience of the text on their own previous knowledge (Rosenblatt 1994: 12). What I believe is a further strong reason for textbook tasks to have a more varied challenge on the reading literacy, is to develop the students to become resourceful members of a democratic society. In order to prepare and train the students towards this aim, the foundation skill of reading is one of the key elements in my mind.

6.2 Identifiable qualities of a good task composition
As a part of the summary of this thesis, I would like to present a suggestion of some of the qualities a task setup, according to the theories this thesis is based upon, suggest. This task

setup does not necessarily just apply to the English textbooks and the tasks in these in relation to literary texts. It might be seen as a bit audacious as this suggestion is lacking good empirical research based on the developments in the classrooms where tasks of the suggested qualities have been tested. Nevertheless, on the basis of the theories and my professional experience from teaching in upper and lower secondary, I do believe this setup for tasks might be a positive contribution.

- First there should be pre-reading activities, especially when breaking from the bottom-up and efferent approaches to literature. Pre-reading activities are legitimised as tasks because they support the students' development of scaffolding for their unfinished schemata. In addition the pre-reading tasks also "tune" the students in on how they are expected to respond to the text and therefore how they should treat the text. These tasks should in addition be closed in relation to the possibilities of the answers, but it is important that the class is allowed to discuss why the answer in order to develop an understanding.

- Second, there should be some tasks that might provide the student with better prerequisites, for the more developing tasks, by providing additional information to the student in order to help filling in the students incomplete schemata. These tasks should be in the efferent dimension and the students should end up with the same answer, as the information gained from this or these tasks is for the purpose of preparing the students for further work. The tasks should not function as a control-unit to make sure that the students have read the text, but rather promote a variety in reading literacy. These tasks should hold the more intensive reading strategies as in the PISA reading levels *level 1* and *level 2*. *Skimming* and *scanning* the text for information should be the preferred reading literacy in these tasks, but they might also move over towards the more *infernal reading literacy* and tasks with *divergent* task answers.

- Third, are the aesthetic tasks. These are the tasks that will give the students the most beneficial challenges and therefore might also be key elements to the students' development in the subject**.** These tasks are where the students are allowed to experience the creative and critical literacy, as the students may explore and ponder the text as described in the foundation skill. They should further be open ended in order for the students to exploit the productive and receptive benefits of the aesthetic

dimension and they should challenge the students from *level 3* to *level 5* in according to the PISA reading levels.

It is important that these tasks utilise the possibilities that are within each text they are made for. It is also important that the textbook tasks offer the students a balanced variation of reading strategies if the foundation skill is to be developed according to the aims in the subject syllabus. The benefits of the top-down reading strategy should be exploited more than it is in tasks today in order to develop the students' choice of reading strategies. This would also move the focus over from the efferent reading response, and over to the aesthetic response and the more natural approach to literature. This would strengthen the meaning and interaction between the text and the reader (Kramsch: 178). The tasks should also offer a wide range of tasks that promotes all of the basic skills according to their aims.

6.3 Further work

There are several other approaches to the thesis topic I have found interesting to pursue during the process of this thesis. First and foremost I would like to investigate the findings of this thesis might be reflecting the quality of the textbook tasks in other English subjects and levels. This could either strengthen the findings of this thesis, or give indications to claim that the results in this thesis is only applicable to the textbooks made for the Knowledge Promotion VG3 subject *English Literature and Culture*.

Another interesting direction is that it would be interest to compare the development of reading literacy. This could reveal how a more balanced inclusion of reading responses in textbook tasks affects the students' development of the foundation skill.

Moreover, it would be interesting to address investigate how well the reading literacy is trained through the tasks in other subjects as English.

It would also be interesting to interview textbook authors to get an insight into the conditions they work under. This could give more information about the textbook authors' intentions with the textbook tasks and not just how they are being analysed in this thesis.

6.4 Ending conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to address whether the textbook tasks exploited the possibilities within the possible reading responses, or not. Through the process of the hermeneutic method, the result from this thesis show that the textbook tasks are quite instrumental and that they are *not* sufficient tools to develop the foundation skill of reading.

My findings can be strongly supported by reports such as the SMUL-report (Hodgson, J. et.al.: 2012) where they present teachers as quite dependent on textbooks, that task answers are seldom discussed or treated as having closed task answers (Cook: 161). However, one of the concerns presented in the report is that the survey data gives indications to support a view of a school where the students are frequently challenged with tasks that mostly involve identification, producing, registering words, conceptual development and facts (Hodgson et.al: 15).The findings in this thesis is further supported by the results of research by Ragnhild Lund (2001) and L.H. Faye-Schøll (2009). The analysis in the pre-test for this thesis also gives reason to indicate that textbook tasks will firstly develop the efferent reading response, and that this will also provide a focus on the reading literacies that are described in level 1 and level 2 in table 2.1. The other reading responses and reading levels are touched upon, but the question that remains is whether these reading literacies are trained and developed if they as seldom represented in textbook tasks as presented in this thesis.

The Norwegian primary and secondary school has a responsibility for the students' development of qualities that may help them in the progress of becoming resourceful individuals in a democratic society. According to Ibsen, a strong impression from being exposed to good works of art leads to a need for communication (Ibsen & Wiland: 139), and it might therefore be natural to reap the benefits by including textbook tasks that also would promote aesthetic reading response. It is further stressed that if a student is to respond to literature, they need both the knowledge of the craft behind as well as the ability to explore the text with a well-trained reading literacy.

Due to the findings in this thesis, it has to be pointed out that teachers have to be more aware of their choice of tools. Moreover, it is presented that the development of the foundation skill of reading literacy demands more teachers that challenges students to discuss their task-answers in a more varied challenge of the reading literacy than what the analysed textbooks can provide.

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Figures and tables

Figure 2.1 and 2.2: in Ibsen, E., & Wiland, S. M. (2000). *Encounters with literature: the didactics of English literature in the context of the foreign language classroom in Norway.* Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget. (Page: 189).

Figure 3.1: Analysis model

Table 2.1: PISA. (2006). *PISA Reading Framework of 2006,* (Accessed: October 18th, 2012)

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Table 2.2: Theoretical overview